1-1-2003

Learning resistance in West Timor.

Karen, Campbell-Nelson
University of Massachusetts Amherst

LEARNING RESISTANCE IN WEST TIMOR

A Dissertation Presented

by

KAREN CAMPBELL-NELSON

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

February 2003

School of Education
Department of Educational Policy, Research, and Administration
Center for International Education

LEARNING RESISTANCE IN WEST TIMOR

A Dissertation Presented

by

KAREN CAMPBELL-NELSON

Approved as to style and content by:

Gretchen B. Rossman, Chair

James A. Hafner, Member

Sangeeta Kamat, Member

Robert J. Miltz, Member

Andrew Effrat, Dean
School of Education

DEDICATION

To my *nitu*,

Drew Lynn Lance Campbell
Erwin Panjaitan
David Kinsey
Maria Kase
S. S. H. Oematan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee, Gretchen Rossman, James Hafner, Sangeeta Kamat, and Robert Miltz for their guidance, support, and friendship. I am also grateful to members of the Center for International Education who provided the conditions for academic exploration during my years there. My special appreciation goes to Anna Donovan, Barbara Gravin-Wilbur, Yanti Mirdayanti, Rita Raboin, Janna Shadduck-Hernandez, and Thomas Zschocke for exceptional logistical, intellectual, and moral support. I would like to thank the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for a 12 month Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grant. To the *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia* and *Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana* I am grateful for help in facilitating the research process in Indonesia. For help in acquiring maps I thank *BAPPEDA, Bidang Fisik, Seksi Tata Ruang* and *Departemen Pertambangan TTS*. For access to government documents and data I thank staff of both the Sub-Regency Office of North Mollo and the Lelobatan Village Office. For other valuable data I am particularly grateful to several Indonesian NGOs – CIS, JATAM, PIAR, and PIKUL. Ken George deserves thanks for his careful reading and critical comments on portions of this dissertation. Deep gratitude is also expressed to my research assistants, "Yeri," "Serly," and "Gerson," and to my extended family in Noelbaki and Lelobatan, particularly "Mama Debora," "Papa Tius," "Mama Maria," and "Ana" for being such loving teachers. Thanks also to the activists in West Timor who unceasingly resist violence and debilitating moral conditions in their struggles for justice. Their determination and resilience continue to inspire me. I thank C. Dean Freudenberger for his role in setting me on this path in the first place. Special thanks go

to Katie and Sam for joining me on this path, even when it meant going half-way around the world and back again, and for making sure I had something to show for it. And to John Campbell-Nelson, thank you for all the above and more.

ABSTRACT

LEARNING RESISTANCE IN WEST TIMOR

FEBRUARY 2003

KAREN CAMPBELL-NELSON, B.A., NEBRASKA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

M.A., SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Gretchen B. Rossman

This case study, set in the south central highlands of West Timor, Indonesia, presents a range of strategies used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local farmers to resist the mining of two marble peaks. The narrative, set within the context of political developments in Indonesia in recent years, is presented through several genres to enhance an ethnographic exploration of learning in a context of resistance. Some of the issues explored in the telling of the tale include gender and resistance, and the juxtaposition of NGO and farmer strategies of resistance as shaped by their different relationships to social and political institutions of the nation-state.

The study, however, is not limited only to a discussion of strategies, the "what and how" of resistance – resistance as curriculum – but also looks at resistance as a learning regime, the heuristic occasion for the articulation of identity in which those on the underside of power assert human identity over an identity as victims. The analysis of resistance as learning regime draws on a local hermeneutical framework that situates recognition as a response to the epistemological violation inherent in the mining, rehearsal as response to cultural violation, and reciprocity as a response to economic violation. This privileging of recognition, rehearsal, and reciprocity is the perspective

from which I argue that subsistence agriculture is a way of life that integrates rather than separates cultural, ecological, economic, and epistemological aspects of identity. As such, it is a viable alternative to projects of unsustainable economic development, such as mining marble, that tear apart ecological systems and the ways of life embedded in those systems in order to control them.

CONTENTS

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY

Adat	customary law
Aduh	ow! (expression of pain) oh my! (expression of surprise or disappointment depending on the context)
Ama	*Uab Meto*: father
Amaf-amaf	male heads of families who married king's daughters; collectively hold the greatest local political authority; have power to appoint king
Bak-bak	*Uab Meto*: flat round stone once placed in center of field where offerings were placed
Bemo	wide van used for public transportation
Bupati	administrative head of a *kabupaten*
Camat	administrative head of a *kecamatan*
Desa	village
Fatu	*Uab Meto*: rock; *faut* in its metathesized form
Feku	*Uab Meto*: small, wooden whistle for calling cattle
Feotnai	*Uab Meto*: descendants of king's sisters
Hansip	civilian defense unit often given neighborhood patrol tasks
Ibu	formal term of address for a married woman
Istana	palace, in Mollo it means the residence of the traditional king's family
Ka	*Uab Meto*: no, often used in the sense of "it's a crying shame"
Kakak	older sibling
Kase	Uab Meto: do not know, literally do not recognize
Kabupaten	regency, the administrative government territory below a province
Kecamatan	sub-regency, North Mollo is a sub-regency of TTS
Kepala Desa	government appointed village head
Kopassus	TNI's elite special force, notorious for its heavy-handed tactics and clandestine operations
Kot laos	*Uab Meto*: poisonous red bean found in the forest
Lefi	*Uab Meto*: a specific type of *leu-leu* that affects the legs of any person or animal that crosses the path where it has been planted; causes limping, temporary paralysis, and in extreme cases death
Leu-leu	*Uab Meto*: good or bad curses or amulets, in this case used to bring misfortune on one's enemies
Lopo	*Uab Meto*: open-sided thatched hut, culturally marked as male space
Loteng	attic (crawl space between ceiling and roof); in a Timorese round house it is where grains are stored
Lulbas	*Uab Meto*: foot courier
Masyarakat Adat	indigenous people
Meo	*Uab Meto*: traditional warriers of Meto clans
Meto	most populous ethnic group in West Timor
Muatan Lokal	local content, refers to a government program to develop

	contextually unique educational materials
Natoni	*Uab Meto*: men's antiphonal chant
Nau	*Uab Meto*: to walk, also female ancestor after whom Naususu is named
Nemnuke	*Uab Meto*: king's son
Nenek	grandmother
Nitu	*Uab Meto*: spirit of a dead person, sometimes used to refer to the ancestors
NTT	acronym for *Nusa Tenggara Timor*, East Southeastern Islands, an Indonesian province
Om	uncle (from Dutch *oom*, German *Oheim*)
Orba	acronym for *Orde Baru*, the New Order Suharto created to distance himself from Sukarno's *Orde Lama*, Old Order; *ORBA* has become a symbol of corruption and repression
Otda	acronym for *Otonomi Daerah*, Regional Autonomy
Pah Meto	*Uab Meto*: dry land
Pah Tuaf	*Uab Meto*: guardian of the soil, first settler of a territory
Pak	mister (short for *bapak*)
Pemuda	young person (older teenager to young adult)
Raja	king
Rakyat	the people, its emotive connotation is similar to *la puebla* in Spanish
Rp.	short for rupiah
Rupiah	Indonesian currency; exchange rates during fall 2002 ranged from about Rp. 8.500,- to Rp. 9.000,- / US$1.00
Selimut	woven cloth that doubles as male dress and sleeping blanket
Sopi	distilled palm wine
Susu	milk
Tante	aunt
Tetun	the dominant ethnic group in the central part of Timor island that spans both West Timor, Indonesia and Timor Lorosae
TNI	acronym for *Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, Indonesian National Army
TTS	acronym for *Timor Tengah Selatan*, South Central Timor, regency in NTT
Tua-tua adat	traditional elders
Uab Meto	*meto* language
Ume Kbubu	*Uab Meto*: tightly enclosed, thatched, Timorese round house, culturally marked as female space
Uis Neno	*Uab Meto*: sky god
Uis Oe	*Uab Meto*: water god/goddess
Uis Pah	*Uab Meto*: earth goddess
Usi/Usif	*Uab Meto*: ruler, king

CHAPTER 1

FINDING THE GATE AND THE PATH[1]

Of the several stories that have marked me in recent years, I choose one as the path to explore learning resistance in West Timor, Indonesia (Chapter 2). This story's path begins, and ends, in Lelobatan, a mountain village in the North Mollo region of South Central Timor (hereafter TTS) in West Timor in the province of *Nusa Tenggara Timur* (hereafter NTT, Figure 1).[2] Many farmers in Lelobatan opposed efforts by a mining company and the Indonesian government to claim their land as well as their hearts, minds, and identity as a community. Although this story is about the struggle to control territory and resources, both politically and economically, as well as control the meanings embedded in and derived from them, it is not a story about peasant rebellion or agrarian revolt. It is a story about forms of resistance in the face of ecological violence and various violations resulting from it. It is also a story about resistance as a domain of learning.

The story is admittedly lop-sided. The focus is on those who resisted the mining; I do not give supporters of the mining equal time. Except for Ben, one of the local

---

[1] In his study of how the *meto* people in the south central highlands of West Timor (Amanuban region) establish claims in the present based on continuity with the past, McWilliam (1989) identifies the gate and path as one of many dyads used as a metaphor for life. The path suggests not only the historic movement of the ancestors as they settled Timor, but also what spatially links communities and socially links families. The gate represents boundaries, thresholds to households, hamlets, and political domains. I choose this paired metaphor as shorthand for the various physical and conceptual paths I followed and thresholds crossed in my quest to understand a particular case of resistance in West Timor.

[2] During my field research I lived with the Kune family in Heum, a hamlet in the northeastern corner of Lelobatan Village, one of 18 villages (*desa*) in the North Mollo sub-regency of TTS. North Mollo, in turn, is one of eight *kecamatans* in TTS. TTS (pronounced *teh teh es*) is the acronym for *Timor Tengah Selatan*, South Central Timor, and is one of the regencies or *kabupaten* that comprise the Indonesian province of NTT (pronounced *en teh teh*), the acronym for *Nusa Tenggara Timur* or East

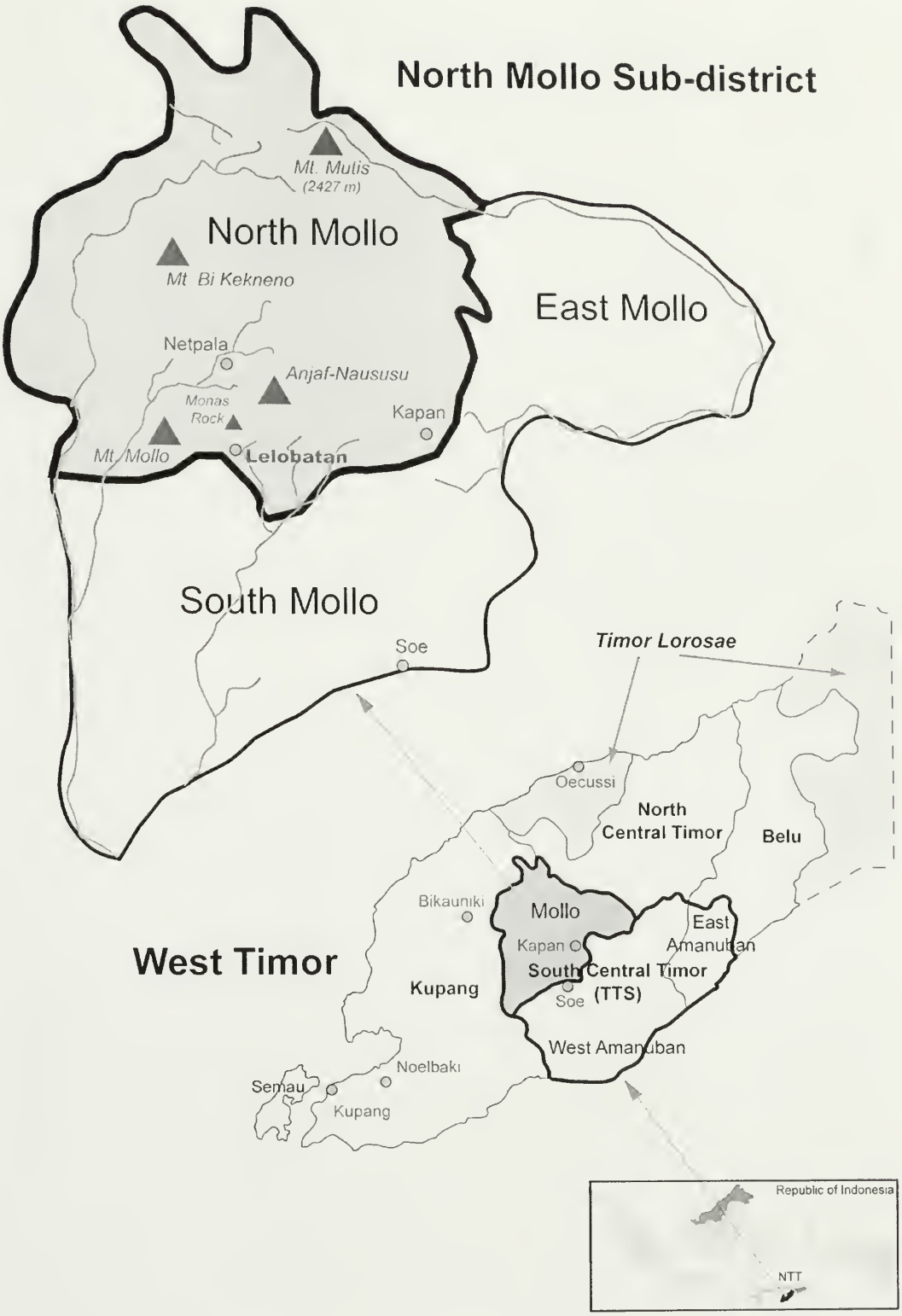

Figure 1: North Mollo – West Timor – NTT Maps

Southeast Islands. In keeping with common local usage, I use the terms TTS and NTT throughout the dissertation.

community "leaders" who co-signed the contract with the mining company, and the government head of TTS (the TTS *Bupati*), mining supporters are not only nameless, they are nearly absent from this story. As I explain in Chapter 5, my intimate association with a family whose members were well-known as backers of the anti-mining effort, as well as local rumors that my husband and I "sponsored" opposition to the mining, made it difficult for me to collect data from mining supporters or farmers who worked at the site. I do not regret the tradeoff; I see no value in pretending to put morality on hold for the sake of "objective" research. The problem is when one's subjectivity denies others their humanity, something I seem to do by ignoring those whose position on the mining I did, in fact, oppose. I acknowledge that my effort to compensate for this in Chapter 5 remains inadequate.

The title of this dissertation, "Learning Resistance in West Timor," is multivalent. Sharing observations about resistance to learning the state's development agenda implied by oppositional responses to the mining of Naususu and Anjaf Rocks is a part of this story. However, it is not only strategies or arts of resistance (Scott, 1990) that interest me, but how the context of resistance creates conditions for the negotiation and reconstruction of values, knowledge, and identity. This story is well-suited to such an exploration, for the rock that is mined embodies aspects of local identity – to resist destruction of the one is to resist destruction of the other. The resistance is also, in some significant ways, resistance to learning development as constructed and enforced through state institutions and mechanisms of the market. In Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), the oppressed are situated as peasants who learn to read and write in ways that facilitate their conscientization. The pedagogical focus is on literacy. I also deal with

learning and oppression, but not literacy. In the story I tell, the oppressed are catalysts as well as learners who, by various means of resistance, challenge dominant economic and political interests as well as the knowledge systems that support those interests. I look not at how conscientization is learned so much as at how existing communal consciousness and identity are manifest through various strategies of resistance. "Learning Resistance," then, suggests not only a study regarding the strategies, the "what and how" of resistance – resistance as curriculum – but also resistance as the heuristic occasion for the articulation of identity, the context in which those on the underside of power assert human identity over an identity as victims – resistance as learning regime. To posit resistance as both the strategies that comprise it as well as ways of knowing, learning, and living is to follow a meandering path in which the analysis takes on different characteristics at different times, depending on which threshold is crossed. It is an approach reminiscent of the paths I followed in West Timor between hamlets and fields, lowlands and highlands, conversations and books. It is a motion that sometimes circles back upon itself as pieces of meaning discovered in one chapter connect with meanings in another that, together, take on greater fullness once the path has been walked and its several thresholds crossed. This path of tears and fear, laughter and love has been partially forged, partially discovered, and now, finally, it has been written.

From "Learning the Land" to "Learning Resistance"

Contexts, like the events that define them, don't hold still. Take, for example, the contexts of this dissertation research and my movement in and out of them. In the fall of 1997, I wrote my research proposal, "Learning the Land." At one level I wanted to show that farmers in West Timor, with their rich stores of local knowledge, are the best hope

for sustainable management of natural resources. It was an argument I felt needed to be developed for government, educational, and religious leaders in NTT who lack a meaningful critique of regional economic development. But I also wanted to study local hermeneutics in the search for a vocabulary to talk about the relationship of local peoples to their land that moved beyond that of resource management. I wanted to learn not only the many different ways people identify with their land, but also how the land bears their identity.

My particular attention to learning in the proposal grew from the realization that learning relates both to the formation of worldviews as well as to the socialization of values, including how to "read and write" signs of dominance and subordination. For those clued in to the West Timor semiotic system, dominance is marked by signs of literacy. Educated men will differentiate themselves by frequently allowing one of their thumbnails to grow excessively long (no farmer could work with such nails!), and male government civil servants are almost sure to decorate the front pocket of their government-issued uniforms with a pen.[3] As one site for sustaining a public transcript of power, formal education is, not surprisingly, also a site fraught with corruption.[4] Relations of domination and subordination are present all up and down the ladder of power, but the demarcation between schooled and unschooled is stark. Despite growing

[3] The distinction is more complicated than non-village civil servants (or police officers or shop keepers) vs. unschooled farmers. Recently in Lelobatan, some farmers were angry at other farmers who felled a traditionally protected forest. As one farmer pointed out to me, those who felled the trees were the schooled farmers while those angry about it were unschooled. Yet even among farmers the pen-in-the-pocket signs status. A sharp observer on a Sunday morning in church will note that the schooled farmers in attendance will be sure to have a pen in the pocket of their Sunday best shirts, almost as if it were jewelry.

[4] A number of scandals related to education occurred in 2001. Well-publicized scandals within NTT's Education Department include the case of 5 computer/printer/scanner units whose cost was marked

numbers of unemployed high school and college graduates, getting a degree, legitimately or not,[5] is how homeboy makes good.[6]

The research site I chose had a long history of land contestations. I knew this when I wrote my dissertation proposal in 1997. Although the theme of resistance did not take front stage in that proposal, it was present as backdrop. After my arrival in the field in 1999, I learned that the latest land contestation centered on Anjaf and Naususu, a pair of mountain peaks where marble mining was to be resumed after having been shut down in the face of popular resistance only a year earlier (Figure 2).[7] As I observed a range of responses to the marble mining, I began to consider how I might give more focused consideration to the role of resistance in relationship to learning the land.

However, I was unable to hold still long enough with that particular context to bring satisfactory closure to my research according to the original timeline. In early September 1999, my work was suddenly and utterly disrupted when more than 250,000

---

up to a total of 1.7 billion rupiah (~US$189,000.00) and misappropriation of funds in a 51 billion rupiah project (~US$5,666,667.00) for the Expansion and Improved Quality of Middle Schools.

[5] Several cases highlighted by the press towards the end of 2001 exposed the problem of students in West Timor, some accepted into a college, others into an army academy on the basis of falsified documents. An official in the NTT Education Department claimed such practices had been occurring since the 1970s, so was sceptical that any objective investigation would be possible ("Pejabat Dikbud NTT," 2001). The problem is not limited to NTT. In April 2002, rectors of 58 institutions of higher education across Indonesia harshly criticized the practice of buying and selling academic degrees ("58 Rektor PTN," 2002).

[6] Prior to East Timor's successful bid for independence, the territory was a convenient region for absorbing large numbers of otherwise unemployed civil servants from other regions of Indonesia, including NTT. Many of NTT's headaches with "East Timor refugees," even now three years since they arrived in the province, are created by this workforce whose members remain angry for having their future stolen from them.

[7] The mining of Anjaf rock first began in 1998 and was stopped several months later by NGOs and local farmers who joined to protest the mining. When I arrived at the field site in 1999, I discovered a mixture of indignation and resignation among local farmers who had to face the realization that their earlier protests had not brought a permanent halt to the mining.

people from East Timor, including as many as 50,000 armed and angry men, flooded into West Timor following a referendum held in East Timor on August 30, 1999 in which the vast majority of people voted for independence from Indonesia.[8] Although the remote mountain hamlet where I lived seemed safe enough, Noelbaki where my family lived about 15 kilometers east of Kupang, the capital of NTT province, was not. I chose to leave my research site and join my family when I learned that militant pro-Jakarta East Timorese were promoting anti-white sentiment in an apparent attempt to avenge their humiliation at losing the referendum so resoundingly.[9]

The flight path between Kupang and Dili took TNI[10] military transport planes and UN helicopters directly over the house where I stayed in the hills of North Mollo. Their passing became more frequent during the weeks leading up to the referendum. During those weeks I would sit in the field site for an hour or two each afternoon, earbugs in my ears, picking up shortwave news on Radio Australia and the BBC about developments in East Timor. News of the terror let loose there, even before the referendum results had been announced, increased my concern for my husband who, along with thousands of

---

[8] More than 78% of the voters chose independence over the "special autonomy" status coercively promoted by the Indonesian government and its security apparatus.

[9] The politics of race were a key element in the Indonesian-East Timor crisis, with pro-integration supporters blaming Westerners (strategically identified as all white people), particularly Australians, for having engineered the overwhelming vote for East Timorese independence. Thus a political target was conflated to become a racist one. The day before I arrived in Soe, several Anglos from an Australian aid group had to flee for their lives when they were attacked during a visit to the refugee camp located across the rice fields from my Noelbaki home. When a bomb was detonated at a tourist pub in Bali several years later, nearly 50% of the ± 187 people who died were Australian. One of the scenarios floated in Indonesia to explain the bombing was that the attack was payback by TNI, the Indonesian military, to "the West," particularly Australia, for interference in Indonesian domestic affairs, particularly for supporting independence for East Timor.

[10] TNI (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, Indonesian National Army) is comprised of three branches – AD (*Angkatan Darat*, Land Force), AL (*Angkatan Laut*, Sea Force or Navy), and AU (*Angkatan Udara*, Air Force).

other international observers, was in East Timor to help monitor the referendum process. The news I heard on the shortwave amplified the increasing tension that surrounded me in Lelobatan. Earbugs in my ears, horrible news of razing and looting in East Timor; earbugs out of my ears, the horrible sound of drills carving away Anjaf-Naususu. Backed by political and military officials, militia troops were on the rampage in East Timor, only hours from West Timor. The news reminded me of thugs like them who were backing mayhem at Naususu.

As Scott (1990) writes,

> ...structurally similar forms of domination will bear a family resemblance to one another...subordinate groups in these forms of domination have no political or civil rights...An element of personal terror invariably infuses these relations...a terror that may take the form of arbitrary beatings, sexual brutality, insults, and public humiliations. (pp. x-xi)

From where I sat in Lelobatan in August 1999, the family resemblance between the geographically contested space of Naususu and the politically contested space of East Timor seemed striking, and I found myself drawing parallels. In both locations, territory had been occupied and subordinate groups with neither political nor civil rights were caught in a process of cultural and moral alienation. There also seemed to be similarities in the way local men were divided against each other – some were "recruited" by dominant institutions while others refused to join them.

In North Mollo, the mining company, with help from the local government, "recruited" key village elders to support the mining with promises of generators and zinc roofs. In East Timor, TNI recruited militia with salaries, uniforms, and weapons. Arbitrary beatings, murder, and sexual abuse had marked their presence in East Timor for years. The violence of TNI in East Timor was paralleled by humiliation and threats by

pro-mining individuals serious enough for anti-mining farmers in North Mollo to stand watch over their homes all night long. Before their struggle was over, these farmers too would face armed Indonesian soldiers. I knew that stories of illicit death in East Timor were nothing new, but now I was hearing equally unsettling stories of miners at Anjaf-Naususu in West Timor whose deaths were being kept secret. Corpses in East Timor were often dumped in the ocean; in North Mollo they were dumped in heavily overgrown forests.

Courage too was matched on both sides of the island. Just days before the referendum on August 27, 1999, the BBC World Service reported an outbreak of violence in Dili in which three people were killed. Kofi Anan expressed outrage at the continuing violence, but said the UN was committed to going through with the elections. East Timorese pro-independence supporters said they would not give in to intimidation. I listened to this news and thought of farmers who continued to oppose the mining despite intimidation. Even peaks of violence seemed to coincide – news on September 4th of widespread burning and killings in Dili came only one day after the family with whom I lived in the hills received a bomb threat; news on September 6th that most foreign reporters had left East Timor coincided with news that a teacher vocal in his opposition to the mining had been beaten and left his North Mollo village. Despite the many similarities I could draw, I knew that the terror in East Timor was far greater than anything I would experience in Lelobatan.

The choice to be with my husband and children prompted my move from Lelobatan in the mountains of TTS to my home in Noelbaki, a village located on the coastal plain that skirts Kupang Bay and is bisected by the main trans-Timor highway

that runs from Kupang in West Timor to Dili and Los Palos in East Timor. It was movement I had made several times during my months of research in Lelobatan, but the landscape changed overnight as "camps," choked by hundreds of thousands of refugees and their goods – often looted goods – began to spring up along Timor's major highway.[11] A ten-minute walk up the hill behind my house provided a clear view of refugee barracks in the Noelbaki camp just a wide rice paddy away from my home. In Lelobatan I had lived and worked with villagers struggling to resist both an investor who had begun to mine one of their sacred rocks and a government bureaucracy that needed to keep the investor safe and happy in order to insure its cut of the profit. In Noelbaki I was once again close to friends working with non-government organizations (hereafter NGOs) whose lives had also been radically interrupted by the overwhelming presence of displaced persons. Many of these friends had been compelled to drop their regular work and programs as they struggled to provide sanctuary and aid to pro-independence refugees hiding from bounty hunters, militia groups with names like *Mahidi*, *Besi Merah Putih*, *Aitarak*, and *Sakunar*.[12] By invoking Indonesian nationalist pride (*Mahidi*, *Besi*

---

[11] In West Timor the term "camp" has been used to refer to all locations where there is a concentration of refugees, no matter what the facilities. Although some locations, still being constructed as the refugees flooded in, looked like refugee camps with rows of barracks and latrines, other locations were marked by a plethora of plastic UNHCR tarps or newly built thatched huts, often erected as extensions to houses of local residents or hastily constructed in forests or along the shores of a river or stream. Many refugees did not have a separate dwelling, but moved in with local residents. During the first weeks following the referendum, thousands of refugees had to live in school buildings and on verandas of public buildings for lack of any other place to sleep. Members of my Noelbaki household who passed by the Tuapukan campsite east of Kupang not long after the exodus into West Timor began reported major traffic jams due to truckloads of people and household furnishings being unloaded on both sides of the highway. Considering that the Indonesian army's razed earth policy prior to evacuation from East Timor was preceded by extensive looting that included even the removal of zinc roofing and electric wiring from houses and office buildings, it is safe to assume that many of the items brought into West Timor were stolen goods.

[12] *Mahidi* is an Indonesian acronym for *Mati Hidup untuk Indonesia* (Live or Die for Indonesia), *Besi Merah Putih* or Red White Iron invokes loyalty to "the Red and White," the popular term for the Indonesian flag. In Tetun, an indigenous language of eastern West Timor and western East Timor and the major language in the capitol of Dili, *Aitarak* means thorn and *Sakunar* means scorpion.

Merah Putih) or instilling fear (*Aitarak*, *Sakunar*), such names reveal the thinly disguised conflation of the two that was operative in the Indonesian military's deployment of power.

My awareness of the geography of violence was heightened over the next two months as the highway between my home in Noelbaki and my home in Lelobatan, previously civilian space, became paramilitary space dominated by armed men. The road that had linked these different contexts, bridging my life in the mountains with my life on the lowland plains, had become a barrier separating them. With little hesitation, I shelved the village research and the energy I had given to it to respond to the physical and emotional demands that arose during this state of emergency. That the highway linking my worlds was no longer safe for me to travel created a physical disruption to the work in Lelobatan; that I devoted myself to "refugee issues" became an intellectual and emotional disruption.

Although I returned to Lelobatan for another six weeks at the end of the year, it was from a sense of obligation rather than engagement with my research. Promptly thereafter, I resumed documentation work on refugee issues that had engaged me during the two short months I was away from the field.[13] Then, while considering ways to refocus my dissertation to accommodate the unexpected interruption to the research and the paths I followed in its wake, everything changed once again. On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center and Pentagon were attacked. Immediately stories began to circulate about hate crimes in the US towards Muslims and anyone mistaken to be one.

---

[13] For nearly two years following field research in Lelobatan, I worked with a group of women who documented and sought to support East Timorese women survivors of violence in West Timor refugee camps. Findings from this investigation are analyzed in *Perempuan dibawa/h laki-laki yang kalah* (Campbell-Nelson et al., 2000).

At the same time in a few cities in Java, anything thought to represent the US, from fast food chains to tourists, became targets of extremist Muslim groups who sought to avenge US aggression against the Muslim world. Police throughout Indonesia were put on alert to protect US citizens. Where I live in predominantly Christian NTT, their duty appeared to be a light one. Throughout the entire province of nearly four million people, members of only three households held US passports and, the police concluded, were unlikely to be harassed. Nevertheless, an agent from police intelligence dutifully visited our home. Yes, he informed us, it was possible that illegal immigrants from Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan currently being held in Kupang might include anti-US "terrorists." We agreed that caution was advised, but that it was not necessary for us to leave NTT.

Despite Bush's emphasis that the war was against terrorism and not Islam, long histories of strife in Indonesia that exploit religious difference gave many Indonesians cause for concern. Would the anti-US sentiment promoted by hardline Muslims provoke attacks against Indonesian Christians?[14] Again I had reason to feel conspicuous as a white woman known to work with Christian institutions. Although sweeping of foreigners seemed limited to a few cities in eastern Java, I was still nervous when a chance encounter at a hospital in Kupang brought me face to face with several Middle Eastern illegal immigrants.[15] About the same time that a Pakistani friend in New York

---

[14] This suspicion was confirmed by a young Protestant minister serving a congregation on the predominantly Muslim island of Sumbawa who told me that his church had been stoned by Muslims following Bush's threat to invade Iraq.

[15] The problem of *imigran gelap*, secret immigrants from the Middle East moving in large numbers through Indonesia became more widely known after a boat carrying 350 of them capsized in the Java Sea in October 2001. During October and November of that year, NTT police arrested hundreds of immigrants from countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and Palestine on the island of Rote just west of Timor. These groups, traveling by boat from eastern Java to Australia to seek political asylum, were stranded on Rote because of the large waves in the Timor Sea at that time of year. Their arrests lent

City wrote that she was contemplating changing her customary dress to something more Western, I was weighing the possible advantages of regularly donning my various *salwar kameez* from India. Never mind non-Indonesian Muslims in West Timor are rare, let alone citizens of India, I still found myself wondering if I might pass as an Indian Muslim by changing my clothes.

The last several weeks prior to my unplanned departure from Lelobatan, rumored threats of attack on the household where I lived prompted the adults in the household, myself included, to sleep with machetes at our sides. At the time I did not bother with ethical questions about why having a weapon at my side helped me sleep better. My departure from Lelobatan in September 1999 to join my family in Noelbaki did not provide the reprieve from terror I so desperately wanted. I was sick to discover that much of West Timor was held captive by a reign of militia terror. At home in Noelbaki, it seemed global/local connections had become so compressed that I no longer saw myself on some distant southeast Asian island, but rather on the front line of the global gone local/gone loco where we had no choice but to grapple in our daily lives with the impact of global issues. Reduced government subsidies due to global recession and demands by the International Monetary Fund contributed to a weakening of public services in Indonesia. For nearly two years, from early January 2000 to the end of October 2001, I charted the breakdown of electric service that left Noelbaki, the village where I live, without power about 50% of the time.[16] The East Timor issue came in

---

support to suspicions of a syndicate in human trafficking ("Polda NTT," 2001; "Menkopolkam: Sindikat," 2001).

[16] A process for taking remedial action accelerated only after the problem became serious enough to affect thousands of Kupang residents. I managed to keep working at night thanks to a laptop with long battery life and an enterprising husband who set up an office light to run off a regularly recharged car battery.

through my back door when we opened it to provide sanctuary to East Timorese pro-independence supporters hiding from militia. In September 2001 I was confronted by a discourse of terror gone global, where a long-standing US foreign policy of "think locally, act globally" carried new and sinister implications (this terrorist scare that arrives in the middle of my life reminds me of the Red scare of my youth). Even the human trafficking of Middle Eastern refugees had touched me, one of a handful of non-Indonesian women in West Timor.

Since returning to West Timor in early 1999, it seemed my life had become increasingly hemmed in by cycles of violence, expanding around me like concentric circles. That my aura of vulnerability expanded dramatically two times during the research and writing of this dissertation made a difference to the process, and my questions changed. An exploration of interpretive frameworks for understanding local meanings of the land was compelling, but when that exploration was situated within contexts of fear and intimidation, it no longer held the same valence it once had. I felt stuck, unable to break loose from terror's hold, from the violence that had crowded into my life uninvited.

I began this dissertation five years ago thinking I would write about land and its meanings, but by 2002, I knew I had more than one story to share – stories that moved beyond "learning the land" in Lelobatan that the research grant had funded. There were more marks on the landscape as well as on my body and psyche that begged analysis and interpretation. Personal experience of distressed ecologies and communities highlighted my need to identify more explicitly the coercive addendum in an equation where economic interests + deployment of a military-political apparatus to protect them =

damaged ecologies and lives. Although a critique of the "development paradigm" I had fostered during my graduate study still informed my perspective, experience compelled me to consider situations in which violence against people and the environment was more immediately recognized than the indirect coercions of the development discourse.[17]

To enable integrity of voice with which to write, I shifted the focus of my dissertation from local meanings of the land and a critique of development per se to foreground resistance to violence as a context for learning. "Learning resistance" would, I imagined, accommodate the several contexts of resistance I had observed and experienced since 1999 and still keep me linked to my program of graduate study. My new focus suggested that resistance is not only a psychological and emotional strategy against the erasure of identity, but also has implications as an educational context and strategy. What kinds of learning happen in a context of resistance? How do new knowledge and skills, or previous knowledge and skills applied in new ways, function to help individuals and communities survive conflict and violence?

At first I imagined the shift from "learning the land" to "learning resistance" would mean the comparison of two stories – one a story of farmers who resisted the mining of a sacred mountain, the other a story of East Timorese women and those who accompanied them in West Timor who sought to resist male violence in refugee camps in West Timor. Two and a half years after returning to West Timor to do field research, I began to write the stories of individuals and communities who had resisted violence with courage. But I wrote in fits and starts, trying to distance myself from memories of intense fear even as I sought to recapture them in writing. After my involvement in

---

[17] When the development discourse translates into specific development projects, the use or threat of arms is possible. The violence of development is discussed further in Chapter 5.

documenting the stories of East Timorese refugee women in 2000, I could no longer return to and write about my experiences in Lelobatan in the same way. Resistance to violence had become the dominant lens through which I viewed the world and made writing about it a moral obligation. Some of what I wrote was therapeutic, but the demands of a comparative study began to overwhelm me. I kept searching for a better path to write.

After a period of trial and error and helpful feedback from family and friends, I finally settled on the story of resistance to the mining, but that decision was not without its dilemmas. The reason to shift focus from "learning the land" to "learning resistance" had been prompted by personal experiences in observing and negotiating different contexts of violence. I had not set out to research resistance to the mining. It was a sub-stratum that worked its way to the surface. I was confirmed in my decision to attend to resistance when I realized that once mining began, the marble rocks Anjaf-Naususu became quintessential contested space, a perfect site for observing and studying a "border crossing" where multiple perspectives on cultural and political identity, cosmology, and ecology clashed.

Yet when I dropped the story of East Timor refugee women, I lost the leverage needed to problematize gender in a meaningful way. I was now stuck having to admit I had not started my research in Lelobatan from the lives of women. The local strategies of resistance I had documented during my months there were primarily men's strategies. It was the men who prayed, who performed ritual curses and sacrifices, who spied, and whose lineage counted in the struggle to determine rightful legacies to land and cultural authority. To write about resistance to the mining of marble rocks in the hills of TTS was

to write about a struggle fought, first and foremost, in the cultural and political domains of men. I could develop arguments for why this was the case, yet it was painful to admit that while in Lelobatan I had not privileged women's knowledge, experiences, or perspectives of resistance. I had, my data suggested, a far better sense of men's resistance to the marble mining than women's. How was I to "think from women's lives" (Harding, 1991)? Should I forget about gender and pretend there was no problem, make excuses, revisit my data, or try to gather more? Eventually this dilemma became the occasion to break from the voice of previous chapters in search of another. Revisiting my data and gathering more provided the material for Chapter 4; the desire to find another voice with which to write prompted its form. The end result is an intentionally gendered path of resistance where shades of meaning are filtered through the histories of men and experiences of women.

Play(ing) with Liminality

Inspired by Freire's articulation of cultural synthesis as the absence of spectators and the integration of actors with the people "who are co-authors of the action that both perform upon the world" (Freire, 1968, p. 182), Augusto Boal developed theater of the oppressed in which spectators are involved directly in the creation and performance of a play. This variation of political theater does not endorse performances by professional actors before passive spectators who observe someone else's interpretation of their own struggles, but rather facilitates the transformation from spectator to historical actor by inviting spectators to come on stage and enact for themselves various solutions to problems they face (Erven, 1992). During the late sixties and early seventies, theater of the oppressed workshops became popular among activists in Latin America, Asia, and

Africa who used Boal's methods in their arsenal of training methods oriented towards social-political transformation.

Although I could appreciate Boal's concern for cultural transformation and his method for radical democratization of the stage, theater of any kind did not seem appropriate to the Timorese context. Unlike Java, with its famous *wayang* renditions of the ancient Hindu epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*,[18] Timor has no indigenous tradition of dramatic arts,[19] so my experience with theater over the years in Timor had been next to nothing. So why suddenly in the middle of my dissertation do I experiment with a play script? I never intended to write something for political theater or theater of the oppressed in Chapter 4.[20] I began simply to give a "thick description" (Geertz, 1983) of the history of Naususu. Because I wanted to do that more or less through the voices of

---

[18] The Javanese have a long tradition of performing arts that include performances of *Ramayana* and *Mahabhrata*, by either *wayang kulit* (leather puppets), *wayang golek* (wooden puppets), or *wayang orang* (human performers) and accompanied by a gamelan orchestra. There is also a genre of popular theater unique to Java known as *ketoprak*. Inspired by interest in local history, these plays are characterized by noisy and unpolished performances whose actors as well as spectators were originally "self-consciously proletarian," drawn from the urban working class (Susanto, 1997).

[19] Traditionally, Timorese songs and dance were a means to enhance social relations through community participation; they were not performed by a few community members to entertain others in or outside the community. Ironically, the one institution to actively promote performing arts in West Timor is the church. It is common for church choirs and small vocal groups from churches to sing outside their own congregations and participate in church choir contests in which performances are judged by a jury. There are also a handful of congregations led by progressive pastors who have experimented with inculturalization of the Gospel through dramatization of Bible stories. Another performing art known to Timorese is oratory as introduced by the government in its promotion of nationalism. The closest indigenous equivalent to the performatory aspects of oratory would be the infrequent *natoni* chant or recitation of history.

[20] It is worth noting, however, that one of the events in the repertoire of resistance mentioned in the play of Chapter 4, namely Nau's rendition of the last anti-mining demonstration she witnessed, does indeed have the marks of political theater. Performing in public before an audience of pro-mining government and mining officials, miners, and local farmers, the political purpose of the demonstration is obvious, especially since it is a repeat performance of a demonstration that occurred on the same "stage" several years earlier (see n. 12 above). Tambiah (1996) makes a similar point when he writes about how processions in India related to Hindu revival are simultaneously political theater.

those who offered it to me, the play genre presented itself as a reasonable choice.[21] However, once the choice was made I discovered new ways for sharing ethnographic information, including how the *meto* people, the largest ethnic group in West Timor,[22] construct gender and how those constructs were both reinforced and transformed through resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu.

Weeks later, after Chapter 4 was well underway and the novelty of writing a play had begun to wear thin, I tried to remember why I had thought writing about issues of gender and resistance in this way seemed like a good idea. The conviction to stick by this decision was strengthened by a friend who, ironically, was giving me reasons to forsake the play idea. Stating why he preferred a narrative form over a multivocal drama, he explained, "Once I've spent all that time researching an issue, trying to be responsible and knowledgeable (i.e., an authority, someone to turn to), people might as well hear from me." While he could appreciate the play as a good way for me to bring together the many voices I wanted to have speak, he himself did not like a lot of voices – "too dang noisy." His email helped me to realize it was precisely "noise" that I sought. The play, with its multiple voices projected across differences of space and time, serves as a literary device that reproduces the cacophony wreaked by miners' chainsaws and drills heard daily in Lelobatan. By all means, let there be noise in this dissertation! Besides symbolically transferring noise from the field to the dissertation, the play genre also enables me to give credit, even if by using pseudonyms, to the many unpublished men

---

[21] The chair of my committee, Dr. Gretchen Rossman, planted the idea by suggesting I consider writing some of my narration as a play.

[22] See McWilliam (1997), pp. 114-115, n. 1, for an explanation of the term *meto*.

and women of Lelobatan who contributed as much to my study of resistance as did those writers whose books I read.

In the play, people sometimes speak as they did when I recorded them, albeit for the Timorese it is a translated voice. Sometimes I put the words of one person into the mouth of another. With the academics, it is imagined speech based on positions they have presented in writing. Sometimes I am a ventriloquist, using another character to project my own voice. When I wanted characters from different sets (also understood as different regimes of resistance) to speak directly to each other, I brought them out of highly detailed, contextual space to meet in the indeterminate space of center stage. This is how, quite by accident, I created on stage the very space I wanted to explore conceptually, namely liminal space.

In his study of rituals of the Ndembu people of Zambia, Victor Turner (1967) writes of liminality in relation to rites of passage in the life-cycle. These moments of transition from one state of being, social position, age, etc. to another are publicly marked in almost all societies by ceremonies at birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Focusing on initiation rites as ones that "best exemplify transition" (p. 95), Turner explains how the subjects of such rites are in an ambiguous state of transitional-being situated on the threshold between death to the old state (marked by symbols of decomposition such as being treated like a corpse, allowed to be filthy, etc.) and birth to a new state (marked by symbols of gestation such as spending time in womb-like huts, being naked like a new-born, etc.). These liminal personae are "at once no longer classified and not yet classified" (p. 96), "neither living nor dead from one aspect, and both living and dead

from another...neither one thing nor another...neither here nor there, or may even be nowhere..." (p. 97).

Although Turner understands liminality in terms of space as well as time, his study of male initiation rites at puberty tends to privilege temporal liminality. In the play, I invoke spatial liminality. I am not so much concerned with rites of passage – transistions identified and marked by time – as with sites of passage – the point where vectors emanating from different regimes of resistance, some theoretical, some more practical, intersect. It is not initiation from one phase of life to another that interests me here, but rather encounters that occur among those whose paths cross. To enter the liminal, intercontextual zone of this play is not to be in transit so much as to be following a detour, a path other than those usually traveled by any one regime of resistance. There is much from Turner that informs the liminal zone I have created on stage. Like neophytes of initiation rites who are secluded so as to be socially invisible, the actors in this play, once in the space of liminality, are secluded from, and invisible to, their respective contextualized spaces. Those on the metaphorical path to understanding who stop at this liminal intersection when they come to it encounter difference. How these encounters shape the individuals involved is left to the reader's imagination.

Derived from the Latin word for threshold (*limen*), the concept of spatial liminality is well-suited to an exploration of constructs of *meto* identity. In his incisive review of cultural constructions of place in West Timor, McWilliam (1997) explains how *meto* origin journeys conflate person with place. Indeed the West Timor landscape, in a few instances even the seascape, is populated by *fatu kanaf*, name rocks that mark the ancestral origins of each *meto* clan. While in Lelobatan, for example, I learned that the

fatu kanaf of the Oematan clan is Tunbes, of the Lake clan is Saekan and Hauman, of Sonbai, Oenan. Of the 49 clans living in Lelobatan, only three did not have family rock(s) identified. Even if clan members have never seen their rock, they know where it is and still claim it as the source of their clan's origins. Anjaf Rock is the *fatu kanaf* for the Fuakane clan; mining it is a direct affront to this clan. However, Naususu is no one clan's *fatu kanaf*, but plays a meaningful role in the settlement history of all the people of West Timor. To mine it is not only ecologically unsound, it is also to deface an important historical site.

As evidenced by the oral history in Chapter 4, the places the early ancestors settled in their search for land wide and arable enough to farm have names. Each of these settlement sites "projects the record of ancestral experience into the contemporary world" (McWilliam, 1997, p. 104). Affiliation with the past, as McWilliam points out, "tends not to be expressed genealogically in the record of particular generations of named ancestors, but rather spatially across the landscape by associating the group's name with specific places and named localities" (p. 106). He identifies the gate and the path (*enon ma lanan*) as the particular metaphor that *meto* communities use to connect themselves to places, a connection they claim by virtue of their history.[23] In daily language *eno* means door, but in ritual language it refers to the border entrance to a neighboring political community. It is this latter meaning McWilliam captures when he translates the word as gate. The purpose of the path is that it leads one to the gate at the border, that point where connection, alliance, and social relations with those "beyond" is possible. To

[23] Chatwin's very readable account of Australian Aboriginal constructions of identity and place (1987) suggest that Aboriginal songlines, like the *meto* path, make use of oral tradition that connects people to the land. Whereas *meto* identity merges with particular sites, Aboriginal identity seems more tied to movement along Dreaming-tracks invisible to all but those who walk them.

come into a territory by another way, without passing through the gate (which includes coming before the elders of that territory to present yourself and explain your purposes there), is equivalent to a thief sneaking into a house through a back window rather than crossing the proper threshold. The path and gate, then, play an important role in maintaining social order.[24] An understanding of the *meto* gate as the conceptual threshold that leads from one community to another adds meaning to the play's liminal space of center stage. On stage, the intersection of metaphorical paths between different contexts and implied regimes of resistance forms a space of encounter, a gate or threshold that, once crossed, brings one into indeterminate space that enables listening and dialogue across differences.

Several strategies of resistance used by farmers opposed to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu assume this traditional conflation of identity with place. To recall their affiliation with particular sites and reassert their authority in those places, opponents to the mining narrated oral history (Chapter 4). This strategy sought to resist erasure of identity resulting from the destruction of Anjaf-Naususu, a site in which that identity is embedded. Another strategy, the protest poster that never saw the light of day (Chapter 2), eloquently evoked the concept of the gate. Had it gone according to plan, the protesters would have posted their banner at the symbolic threshold, the *eno*, to the territory of Mollo which they claim as the bedrock of their identity.

---

[24] A traditional *meto* wedding ceremony requires that the groom and his family approach the bride and her family in spatially-marked stages where the man's family must repeatedly stop at a number of doorways and seek permission to enter from the woman's family before they may cross the threshold. The request to enter and the response are carried out in ritual speech that includes concepts of exchange and negotiations of familial alliance.

Another compelling reason to highlight liminality is its instructional character. Turner (1967) notes a highly specific social structure during the liminal period of initiation rites in which there "is often complete authority and complete submission" between instructors of arcane knowledge and neophytes for whose initiation the instructors are responsible (p. 99). The elders hold absolute authority to instruct the neophytes in knowledge that will be needed in order to hold future roles in society as well as in the secret knowledge of the sacred nature of things (names of spirits, cosmogony, mythical history, etc.). In contrast to this relationship, "there is often complete equality" among neophytes (p. 99) whose social invisibility requires they enter a state of "sacred poverty" in which they are stripped of all rank and status, of all "hierarchically arrayed positions" (p. 100) associated with economic and social status.

Although the play includes community elders and university professors who instruct, their pedagogical authority as instructors is limited to their identified contexts and does not spill over onto center stage. This liminal space is reserved for dialogue where the sacred poverty of complete equality is respected. It is not, by definition, a playing field where social-economic differences have been miraculously leveled; it is, however, the space where such leveling is possible through dialogue. The liminal space, then, invites a push and pull between desire for the familiarity of insiders (Karen, alarmed by racist discourse present in the oral history she hears, welcomes the presence of an academic colleague with whom she can openly vent), suspicion of outsiders (Sefnat and Yohanes harbor suspicions that the university professors may really be investors in disguise), and efforts to resolve these tensions. If those who meet in this liminal space have not fully succeeded in freeing themselves of their roles and status, at least their

struggles to negotiate equality are not in vain. The instructive nature of this push and pull towards recognition, familiarity, and trust is developed more fully in a section of Chapter 5, Recognition as Response to Epistemic Violation.

The ghost in Chapter 4 is not solely inspired by Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*; Turner is again influential. In his discussion regarding the means through which the sacred is communicated during initiation rites, he considers three problems, "their frequent disproportion, ...their monstrousness, and...their mystery" (p.103). The one he relates most clearly to "pedagogic intention" (p. 106) is the use of monsters, created by taking elements out of their usual contexts and recombining them to form often grotesque configurations, e.g., a human head on a lion's body. Turner argues that juggling categories of experience and knowledge with monsters is "aimed not so much at terrorizing or bemusing neophytes into submission or out of their wits as at making them vividly and rapidly aware of what may be called the 'factors' of their culture" (p. 105). The ghost in Chapter 4 plays a similar role. Representing the university library as a past form of bounded, legitimated knowledge, this ghost does not frighten, but through comic relief invites reflection on relations of power and knowledge.

Another way in which the play's liminality is pedagogically similar to the liminality of initiation rites relates to what Turner calls "nonlogical sacra...the symbolic template of the whole system of beliefs and values" (p. 108). In initiation rites the instruction of liminality involves a dissociation of culture into component parts that are then recombined in monstrous forms and finally recombined in ways sensible to initiates in their new state of being. In this play's liminal space, learning includes debate, disagreement, and whispered asides. The over-riding ethos, however, is dialogical. In

both instances, Turner's initiation rites and the play in Chapter 4, the pedagogical purpose relates to reflection on identity and the formation of beliefs and values made possible by moving into an inter-structural place and moment located between established social and political contexts. In the instance of initiation rites, liminality establishes conditions for transformation from one stage of humanness to another; in the play it creates conditions for certain kinds of encounter. To resist structures that inhibit transformation and dialogue across difference need not always mean direct confrontation, but may mean displacement into a space located between structures, socio-political contexts, regimes of resistance. By facilitating dialogue across different contexts of resistance, the liminal space of Chapter 4 invites reflection on partnerships that could enhance the process of learning resistance.

The Gloomy Backdrop

The story of resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu is better understood against the backdrop of dramatic political changes that have occurred in Indonesia in recent years. My first efforts to unravel and chart this tale of resistance on paper began during the weeks following a constitutional coup in July 2001 in which President Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) was impeached for something as vague as "lack of kinergy,"[25] and Megawati Soekarnoputeri, his Vice President, was installed as

[25] The Indonesian Parliament (MPR) can impeach the president for failure to comply with legally binding performance guidelines, even though the guidelines are vague and open to multiple interpretations. Among criticisms of Gus Dur was that he hadn't moved quickly and efficiently enough on eradicating KKN (*korupsi, kolusi, dan nepotisme* – corruption, collusion, and nepotism). The reality, however, was that Gus Dur was serious about reform. The Attorney General's office under Gus Dur's administration had begun to reopen a number of major unsolved corruption cases, Gus Dur had pressured Wiranto, one of the major generals involved in East Timor, to resign, etc. The anti-corruption tactic is a classic example of how Indonesians in power (or losing their footholds of power) used a public transcript of noble sentiment – "Time to crack down on KKN" – to mask a hidden transcript of treachery – "Time to get rid of Gus Dur."

Indonesia's fifth president.[26] I recall watching with horror as a number of reforms erected since the fall of Soeharto in 1998 began to fall like dominoes, and former symbols of *Orba*[27] quickly took their place. Since Megawati's inauguration, fallen dominoes include the murder of Syafiuddin Kartasasmita, Supreme Court judge who sentenced Tommy Soeharto to 18 months in jail, shot dead while driving his car in Jakarta.[28] Golkar, the administrative machinery of Suharto's 32-year regime that had been threatened with dissolution under Gus Dur, was officially declared free of threat.[29] In fact, Golkar Party leader Akbar Tandjung, a close contender in the race for Megawati's Vice President and accused of skimming funds, told Golkar members to begin preparing for elections in 2004.[30] Head of the national police, General Bimantoro, dismissed by Gus Dur for insubordination, was reinstated and threatened retaliation against mid-level

---

[26] Despite predictions long before Megawati's installation that Gus Dur was on his way out, my initial response to her inauguration was one of shock and outrage. The parliament had moved forward its special session with the prime purpose being to impeach Gus Dur. This constitutional coup was backed by a military threat, most graphically visible when a number of army tanks surrounded and aimed their guns at the presidential palace where Gus Dur stayed throughout the special legislative session. Although I heard several verbal reports of this incident, including mention of it by a BBC reporter, I never saw any images of it in papers or on TV as there was apparently a media blackout.

[27] *Orde Lama* or Old Order is the term commonly used to refer to the period from Indonesia's independence until Soeharto came to power in 1965. *Orba*, short for *Orde Baru* or New Order, is the term used to refer to Soeharto's era and today connotes all the abuses associated with it. Since Soeharto's fall, the popular term is *Zaman Reformasi*, Reformation Period, or *Era Reformasi*, Reformation Era.

[28] Tommy Soeharto, after his original sentence, went underground for more than a year. After being arrested a second time at the end of November 2001, he was again tried on two counts of illegal possession of firearms and explosives, for planning the murder of Judge Syafiuddin Kartasasmita, and for escaping after his first conviction. He is now serving a 15 year sentence in a prison in Central Java ("Tommy dikenakan," 2002; "Tommy tetap," 2002).

[29] When it was announced by the Supreme Court that Golkar would not be disbanded, protesters released a black chicken onto the floor of the courtroom.

[30] Akbar Tandjung was sentenced to three years for a corruption scandal known as Buloggate involving 40 billion rupiah of non-budgeted funds of the Bureau for Logistical Matters that oversees the distribution of rice in Indonesia. He continues as moderator of the National People's Representative Assembly and head of the Golkar party while his sentence is being appealed. His supporters say that even if he is imprisoned he can continue to lead the Assembly since the law dismisses only members who must serve a prison term of five or more years ("Akbar bisa," 2002).

police officers who had spoken out against their superiors during Gus Dur's rule. The Department of Information, which Gus Dur dissolved because of its control of the press during Suharto's reign, was reinstated under a new name as Ministry of Information and Communication along with assurances there is no need to worry about censorship,[31] an indication there are plenty of reasons to worry about its re-emergence. Citizens once again need permission in order to hold demonstrations; women press corps members are no longer allowed into the presidential palace unless they wear skirts. Attorney General Baharuddin Lopa, known as incorruptible and intent on bringing to trial those accused of heavy human rights abuses, including abuses in East Timor following the referendum, and Lt. Gen. Agus Wirahadikusumah, head of strategic army command (*Kostrad*) who was outspoken in his calls for internal reforms within TNI, died within weeks of each other. Although neither man had a previous history of heart disease, in each case the cause of death was announced to be heart failure. When the specter of a resurgent *Orba* began to raise its ugly head, no one was there to strike it down. The masses of students and their middle-class supporters who brought about the downfall of Suharto had, it seemed, been reabsorbed into a meek and mild body a-politic.

To make my own sense of these dismal reversals and reprisals by Indonesia's corrupt old guard, I had first to deal with the outrage I felt at the US government's resounding support for Megawati. President Bush's public and almost immediate congratulations to Mega were no doubt intended to minimize any negative reactions to

[31] Vice President Hamzah Haz said the scope of the Ministry for Information and Communication in the new cabinet would not be the same as the Department for Information during the New Order ("Menneg informasi," 2001), and the new InfoCom Minister, Syamsul Muarif, said he would step down if Mega wants censorship ("Menneg Infokom," 2001).

this coup by providing a seal of international legitimacy.[32] His call for normalization of military relations between the US and Indonesia[33] prior to September 11 suggests that Bush's foreign policy in Indonesia was intended to insure political, thus economic, stability at all costs.[34] If the economy is global, then repression of criticism of such an economy has also become global.[35]

---

[32] Bush's statement heard on BBC's Asia News (October 15, 2002) a few days after the bomb explosion in Bali seems a reversal of his position when Megawati came to power. In typical aggressive posturing, Bush threatened something to the effect that if President Megawati is unable to take care of the terrorists in Indonesia, then the US would need to do so. It is unlikely he means direct intervention, but he may be suggesting the US is prepared to "support" a change in leadership as it has in the past.

[33] Responding to pressure by groups in the US that lobbied strongly for curtailment of military aid to Indonesia, particularly in relation to military atrocities in East Timor, the US placed a weapons embargo on Indonesia that extended to such items as spare parts for air force planes.

[34] ExxonMobil, Nike, and Freeport-McMoran (gold mining in West Papua) represent something of the power of US economic interests in Indonesia. As the Asian edition of *Time* magazine (August 6, 2001) pointed out in a feature article immediately following Mega's inauguration: "Amid reports of increasing atrocities by Indonesian troops, Exxon Mobil prepares to return to Aceh." The article goes on to report that TNI soldiers have been accused of using Exxon Mobil equipment to dig mass graves and the company's warehouses as torture chambers.

> In 1998, a coalition of 17 local human rights groups accused Mobil Oil (the company assumed its current name after merging with Exxon in 1999) of ignoring this evidence [reports of atrocities committed by military troops], including reports that soldiers were using the corporation's earthmoving equipment to bury their victims in mass graves. At least one of those graves was thought to be on Pertamina land [Pertamina, the sole domestic oil company in Indonesia, is owned by the government], less than three miles from an ExxonMobil drill site. At the time, the company pleaded ignorance, saying if substantial claims of abuse were brought to its attention it 'would aggressively respond to and denounce such actions.' (p. 24)

Beginning in late 2000, the Aceh Independence Movement, or GAM, began to target company employees and property (a company plane was hit by ground fire, buses carrying EM employees were blown up, mortars landed on a company facility), forcing EM to suspend operations in March 2001. This led to revenue losses of around $100 million/month. The government promised to quell violence against the company and sent 2000 more troops, including *Kopassus* (special command forces), into the area where they set up military camps every 500 meters along the company's pipeline. ExxonMobil is required by its contract with the government to fund the troops and has made sure there's a clause that prohibits soldiers from conducting offensive operations in the field. This, however, does not seem to be binding. EM has never been known to inquire into abuses by the troops paid to provide "security" for the company's operations nor has it requested they be replaced. Only a few months after EM suspended its operations, they were resumed following an announcement that security had been restored to the company's satisfaction.

[35] The US anti-terrorist campaign following the September 11th attacks has given Indonesia unprecedented bargaining power. During President Megawati's visit to Washington on September 19, 2001 (the first head of state to visit the US following the attacks), Bush made major concessions to Indonesia including promises to lift the US military embargo and of aid for refugees and internally displaced persons. In the same spirit of "hear no evil, see no evil," the Bush cabinet has, more recently, been conspicuously silent concerning the light sentence of former East Timor Governor, Abilio Soares,

Even under Gus Dur, who ruled from October 1999 until Megawati's rise to power in July 2001, Indonesia's security forces did not provide security, and its legislative representatives did not represent. During much of his term in office, Gus Dur was opposed by a strategy of unsettle and conquer. Although difficult to prove, it is not unlikely that covert support by powerful military and political leaders has, during recent years, heightened unrest in Aceh (North Sumatra), sent thousands of Javanese jihad soldiers to destroy Ambon and the Maluccas, was responsible for bombings in Jakarta, and for horrific violence that broke out between Dayaks and Madurese in West Kalimantan.[36] The constant state of unrest and emergencies gave Gus Dur's cabinet no chance to address reform significantly. His administration was forced to address one

---

sentenced to only three years in prison, and no sentences for several others, including former East Timor Chief of Police, who were on trial in Jakarta for violation of human rights in East Timor.

[36] The **Acehnese** have a long history of resistance fighting. During the last quarter of the 19th century, fighting between the Acehnese and the Dutch was fierce and protracted. The Dutch were finally able to subdue them only through the use of great force and by hiring Acehnese spies. Aceh's inclusion into the Indonesian state was hardly a matter of overwhelming consensus among the Acehnese, and a spirit of separatism over the years has prompted confrontations with Indonesian security forces. The fall of Suharto brought a brief end to a 10 year period of military operation. Since early 2001, the military has again intensified its activities in the region and thousands of Acehnese have been raped, tortured, murdered and disappeared. Although the Indonesian government claims to hold out for a negotiated settlement, its use of military force on the ground seems a rerun of the policy it used for years in East Timor. Immediately following the East Timor bid for independence, GAM, the Free Aceh Movement, called on the government to hold a similar referendum in Aceh. The government refuses to consider such a possibility. On July 21, 2002, a contingent of Acehnese separatists issued the Stavanger Declaration (from Stavanger, Norway) in which they name members of a government in exile and change the name of GAM to TNA, the Acehnese National Army. Current negotiations in Sweden between GAM and the Indonesians have come to a standstill and fighting in Aceh remains intense. In **Ambon and the Moluccas**, it became increasingly clear after intense communal riots broke out early in 1999 that the unrest was due to jihad forces supposedly sent from Java to crush a rumored separatist movement there. When it was discovered that weapons were being smuggled in by sea, sea lanes were policed, yet the violence continued. In July 2000, the campus of the National University in Ambon and several villages were burned, and more than a year later, a car bomb exploded in the city. Jakarta police report that from 1999-2001 there were 38 **bombings in Jakarta**. The police have categorized those behind the bombings into four groups: Acehnese separatists, members of Islamic jihad who target churches, Tommy Suharto, and unidentified individuals ("Tujuh kasus bom," 2001). Exceptional and bloody social unrest occurred in **West Kalimantan** at the end of 1996, the beginning of 1997, and again in March of 1999. In July 2000, tens of thousands of Madurese, many of whom transmigrated to Kalimantan in the late 70s and early 80s, fled West Kalimantan to escape Dayaks. In February 2001, fighting again broke out between Dayaks and Madurese in Central Kalimantan, forcing thousands of people to evacuate that region.

crisis after another while political opponents lent no support. It seemed the military's strategy to bring the nation to its knees and make it beg for the good old days had succeeded.[37]

Scott (1990) writes that one function of public transcripts by dominant groups (as opposed to the hidden transcripts of subordinate groups) is the public performance of power relations through which dominant and subordinate groups maintain their respective roles. "By controlling the public stage, the dominant can create an appearance that approximates what, ideally, they would want subordinates to see. The deception – or propaganda – they devise may add padding to their stature but it will also hide whatever might detract from their grandeur and authority" (p. 50). In Indonesia, control of the public stage means not only the power to control appearances, but also the power to control public discourse, determining what does and does not get discussed in public. In recent years there has been increasing public debate regarding the pros and cons of direct presidential elections in 2004. This debate signals greater democracy but, at the same time, is a shrewd control of public discourse. Since Indonesian independence, those who participate in general elections vote not for particular individuals, but for a party. Legislators are appointed by party leaders to represent the party, not publicly elected to

---

[37] Inciting unrest as a political weapon intended to unseat the president was not limited to Gus Dur's term of office. There is speculation that recurring bouts of violence in the Central Sulawesi region of Poso have been engineered to discredit President Megawati ("Kekacauan Poso," 2002). UPDATE: The bomb explosion in Bali on October 12, 2002 helped me to see that this analysis that pins the blame on TNI is too simplistic. There is growing evidence that much of the violence in Indonesia in recent years has been instigated by extremist Muslims, perhaps in collusion with factions within the Indonesian military. Indonesian political, religious, and military leaders have developed alliances along a number of different vectors that demand a broader analysis of violence across Indonesia than I have given here. Tambiah's (1996) discussion of *focalization* ("the process of progressive denudation of local identities and disputes of their particulars of context and their aggregation") and *transvaluation* ("the parallel process of assimilating particulars to a larger collective, more enduring, and therefore less context-bound, cause or interest") as processes that lead to "progressive polarization and dichotomization of issues" (p. 192) recommends itself as a tool for analyzing dynamics of violence in Indonesia.

represent the people. A more direct system of representation is needed to establish accountability between officials and their constituencies. Keeping the public debate focused on direct presidential elections effectively keeps national attention deflected from the need for direct elections of *all* legislators. Discursive space that appears to be reformist is, in fact, a means to suppress public awareness of the need for more far-reaching and structural legislative reform.

It is painful to experience what at times seems the re-emergence of *Orba* culture – the passive acceptance of repression, the endless lines of marching school children,[38] uncritical media. Everyone seems once again to "accept injustice as justice" (Koenig, 2001, para. 45). It is hegemony in its most awful manifestation, begetting apathy and passivity. How do I describe it? One Saturday night not long after Megawati had been installed as Indonesia's new president, members of my household and I sat on mats in front of the television to watch the evening news as we ate supper together. The weekly "cultural life" spot featured news about a children's badminton game. Normally I would not have paid much attention, but the locution of a father being interviewed was forceful. Behind his lavish praise for the wholesomeness of competitive sports for children, his unarticulated message spoke even more loudly. His praise for an order by which we all should train and raise our children was effusive, emphatic. "They need direction and guidance – guided schools, guided sports, guided behavior." He did not have to sigh with relief; it was present in his words and written all over his face: Thank God we are back to the way things used to be – no more uncertainty, no more crises.

---

[38] That primary school children spend hours of some school days marching in formation, that contests are devoted to this exercise, represents "The desire to inculcate habits of obedience and hierarchy..." (Scott, 1990, p. 12).

Such discourse that expounds the glories of a well-rounded, nationalist education detracts awareness from a major purpose of education in a repressive state – namely the exercise of control by teaching children to follow orders rather than to think critically. This father's choice of the word "guided" suggests a nostalgia for control by invoking Sukarno's notion of "guided democracy" or "democracy with leadership" that marked the end of parliamentary democracy in March of 1985.[39]

The morning following this television broadcast, I listened to a sermon that, as is customary, was based on a bible passage and topic developed by the church's General Synod office. This information is distributed to local congregations for use each week in a kind of trickle-down theory of spiritual guidance. The sermon was about Christian responsibility to the nation and state. Even the church seemed quick to celebrate a return to the old "New Order" where only citizens' responsibilities are stressed and there is nary a word about citizens' rights, human or otherwise. The message from the pulpit that day encouraged obedience to those in power. I listened with clenched teeth, knowing that thousands of congregants sitting in hundreds of Protestant churches throughout NTT were listening to a similar sermon about the importance of respecting a government that had just engaged in a constitutional coup. I took this to be a clear sign that the second largest Protestant church in Indonesia was not inclined to protest anything at this point in history, and my resignation grew.

It seemed the winds of democratic reform that had blown with such hope when I returned to Indonesia early in 1999 had died out completely within just a few months. I

---

[39] "Guided democracy" represented a new political order in which political parties were weakened and the central government held authority. That heightened control by the executive and military branches of the government could be presented and accepted as "democracy" indicates that early on Indonesian leaders became adept at manipulating discourse in the deployment of political and economic power.

was at once dumbfounded and deeply saddened by how quickly the euphoria had blown over. These national and regional events provide a gloomy backdrop to the story of resistance presented here. They are a reminder of conditions that contribute to a growing ethos throughout Indonesia in which ecological destruction, abuses of power, and violence are becoming more the norm than the exception.

From Education to Epistemology to Ethics and Back Again

Writing a dissertation, I have learned, can be full of surprises. As I began to write I was surprised at the many voices and positions, the many strategies and conceptual layers of resistance, that stepped forward to demand due consideration. I was surprised when I discovered liminal space on stage in Chapter 4. Once identified as such I got good mileage out of it, but initially I did not realize what was there. I had first to put chairs on center stage, set Karen down in one of them, and start talking there before I/she recognized the space for what it was. Then there are words that surprise for the insights they unleash. As I began to gather and sort bits and pieces of notes for Chapter 5, I realized that pedagogical issues related to learning resistance, whereas epistemological issues related to ways of knowing resistance. The two were not identical and so could be separated.

I was affirmed in this insight when I discovered critical educators who also make a point of distinguishing pedagogy from epistemology. When Luke and Gore (1992) point out that feminist educators are united in their task to critically examine androcentric assumptions underlying critical pedagogy, but have no "seamless (analytic) epistemological unity" (p. 2), they are not being judgmental about feminist educators, but simply want to make clear that critical pedagogy, even among feminists, is a non-

monolithic discourse. The point I want to stress, however, is not made explicit by Luke and Gore – the language and constructs of educators who address issues of power and knowledge differ from those of philosophers who undertake a similar project. One purpose of discussing critical education and critical epistemology as distinct domains is that such a distinction then allows for complementarity that can enrich an analysis of resistance.

But what bearing does this distinction have on the issues I want to explore? The case I examine follows a pattern all too familiar in Indonesia: the drive for economic gain by dominant groups, supported by a variety of political and security forces (policies, persuasion, and blatantly coercive measures) to protect the drive, the gain, and the interests of the dominant groups, leads ultimately to conflict, often marked by violence. The story of farmers' resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu assumes intimate knowledge of place. This sets the stage for studied reflection on the links between power and knowledge. Whereas political power of the state, coupled with the knowledge and economic power of a mining company, disturb the intimate space of Anjaf-Naususu on an unprecedented scale, the farmers who oppose this violence make use of local historical and cultural knowledge (among other strategies) to counter state power. As I learned in North Mollo, it is not enough to imagine critical pedagogy as the vehicle whereby the farmers learned resistance; the role of knowledge, their way of knowing, as resistance suggests that a consideration of epistemological issues is equally important. A discussion of epistemological (and other) violations imbedded in the mining of Anjaf-Naususu is

developed in Chapter 5. Here I prepare the stage for this later discussion of epistemological violation by situating epistemology in relation to critical pedagogy.[40]

Proponents of critical pedagogy situate education as a tool for resisting the hegemony of injustice. Giroux and McLaren (1991) state: "Fundamental to the principles that inform critical pedagogy is the conviction that schooling for self- and social empowerment is ethically prior to questions of epistemology or to a mastery of technical or social skills that are primarily tied to the logic of the marketplace" (pp. 153-154).[41] Deeply influenced by Freire's articulation of education as the practice of freedom (1973), hooks (1994) clearly links pedagogy to resistance when she advocates for disruption of education, understood as obedience to authority (concretely exercised within "white supremacist capitalist patriarchy"), a disruption necessary to build learning communities. A main purpose of education is to transgress structures of power that oppose the practice of freedom, "confront the biases that have shaped teaching practices in our society and to create new ways of knowing, different strategies for the sharing of knowledge" (p. 12). One such strategy is public dialogue, "one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers to cross boundaries, the barriers that may or may not be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences" (p. 130). Speaking of several public dialogues in which she was involved toward this end, she continues:

---

[40] I have long been both confused and frustrated by what seems to be a discursive gap between those engaged in critical pedagogy and theorists of critical epistemology. I continue to work at understanding the distinctions in order to bring these two together in constructive ways.

[41] Critical pedagogy emphasizes critical practices of teaching, and indeed this is the starting point for radical educators such as Freire, hooks, McLaren, and Luke, to name a few. However, in this study I emphasize learning rather than pedagogy because so much of what might be identified as empowerment circulated within the community itself, in a context without recognized teachers, formal or otherwise.

> ...there seemed to be much more public representation of the divisions between these groups than highlighting of those powerful moments when boundaries are crossed, differences confronted, discussion happens, and solidarity emerges. We needed concrete counter-examples that would disrupt the seemingly fixed (yet often unstated) assumptions that it was really unlikely such individuals could meet across boundaries. (p. 130)

This advocacy of dialogue is a good example of hooks's concern with how liberatory pedagogy can practically work against a domesticating pedagogy that does not address or make space for difference.[42]

It is not only the discourse of critical pedagogy that privileges instructive characteristics of resistance. Abu-Lughod's longitudinal study of Bedouin women (1990) is a good illustration of what I mean by resistance as heuristic occasion or learning regime. She shows how careful analysis of the many forms of resistance can teach us about the shifting complexities of power. Concerned that a romance with resistance has detracted from a critical analysis of power, Abu-Lughod inverts a well-known phrase of Foucault, "'where there is resistance, there is power'" (p. 42), in her call to use resistance not primarily as a means to celebrate the "heroism of the resisters," but as "a diagnostic of power." Viewing resistance and power as dialectically opposed, she matches forms of

---

[42] Even within the arena of critical pedagogy there are debates about how best to strike a balance between theory and praxis. A good example of one who consistently prioritizes praxis is Shulamith Koenig, Executive Director of People's Decade of Human Rights Education. In the summer of 2002, Abraham Magendzo participated in a workshop, "Human Rights Education and Training Issues among Human Rights NGOs," organized by the Arab Institute for Human Rights (Tunisia) and the Documentation Information and Training Center in the Field of Human Rights (Morocco). Stimulated by this experience, he posted a short essay entitled "Human Rights as Critical Pedagogy" to the Human Rights Education email list. Thus began a thread in which people from around the world shared responses to his paper. Koenig's response was forceful:

> I would say that theory can be mulled over again but it is the PRAXIS we need to deal with. It is the village teacher that needs to bring up children who have a human rights value system guiding their lives. It has to be the teacher in the school in Romania that has to bring up children with the values of human rights relevant to their lives and the struggles in their community. It has to be the community leader, the mayor, the governor, that have to know that first of all human rights is about equality and lack of discrimination, which means reorganize society with women as human beings too, and see how it can change and strengthen their community. This is what human rights learning is about!! (email, August 22, 2002)

resistance with concomitant forms of power in order to "move away from abstract theories of power toward methodological strategies for the study of power in particular situations" (p. 42).

Although positions such as these have theoretical foundations, the emphasis is consistently pragmatic – knowledge taught and learned in the classroom, or constructed through verbal and textual conversations, can be used on behalf of realigning oppressive relationships of power. Resistance is characterized by learning – it is learned, and it is the occasion for learning. This is the framework with which I began. But as I continued to think about how to situate resistance within a discourse of knowledge, power, and cultural identity, I realized that epistemological discussions of authority and subjectivity, although more abstract, could also contribute to an analysis of resistance. I turn to critical epistemology to examine issues and a lexicon that might help me talk and think more critically about my long-held concern for lack of epistemological parity among different knowledge systems in general[43] and, more specifically, about the subjects of resistance in Mollo and the claims to knowledge foregrounded by their resistance. "Ways of knowing" is the shorthand expression I use for this inquiry, to mark the epistemological parameters of this analysis.

Feminists concerned with epistemology (a few of whom I introduce in Chapter 4) in particular help drive home the point about power and knowledge "where traditionally what can count as knowledge is policed by philosophers codifying cognitive canon law" (Haraway, 1988, p. 575). Feminists problematize the conventional notion of scientific

[43] My notion of epistemological parity is not dissimilar to Murdoch and Clark's (1994) "symmetrical coexistence" (p. 127) of knowledge systems or to what Longino (1993) calls cognitive democracy (p. 118).

objectivity as impartial, universal, and transcendent to reveal its racist, androcentric (or phallocentric, depending on the author) biases. Efforts to unseat "might makes right" claims to knowledge, to argue that contextual modes of thought and affective reasoning, not just logical reasoning, are valid, have resulted in a rich bouquet of theory, vibrant in its varied colors and smells.

Harding (1991) opts for standpoint theory (knowledge is socially situated, grounded not in women's experience, but in a view from women's lives) with roots in Marxism rather than what she identifies as the other main feminist epistemology, feminist empiricism (ridding empiricism of androcentric bias) with roots in liberalism. In her discussion of valuable resources for feminist research, she argues that "When people speak from the opposite sides of power relations, the perspective from the lives of the less powerful can provide a more objective view than the perspective from the lives of the more powerful" (pp. 269-270), in part because "members of oppressed groups have fewer interests in ignorance about the social order and fewer reasons to invest in maintaining or justifying the status quo than do dominant groups" (p. 126).

Haraway (1991) also writes about the importance of standpoint in her discussion of situated knowledges: "...objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment, and definitely not about the false vision promising transcendence of all limits and responsibility. The moral is simple: only partial perspective promises objective vision" (p. 190). She goes on to articulate her definition of science as characterized by subjugated knowledges:

> We seek not the knowledges ruled by phallogocentrism...and disembodied vision, but those ruled by partial sight and limited voice. We do not seek partiality for its own sake, but for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible. The only way to find a larger vision is to be

> somewhere in particular...Its images are not...the view from above, but the joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions, i.e., of views from somewhere. (p. 196)

Longino (1993) identifies strategies feminists use to address subjectivity. One strategy is to change the androcentric subject of knowledge into something else (e.g., an unbiased subject or an oppressed subject). Another strategy is to multiply subjects of knowledge where scientific knowledge is achieved through interactions among members of a dialogic community who hold different points of view. She concludes by acknowledging the demand for inclusiveness in the production of knowledge, but says there is simultaneously a need for public, albeit changing, standards in order to distinguish between crackpots and those who are politically marginalized. She rejects the notion of epistemic privilege, arguing that it rests on presuppositions of power and powerlessness that need to be dissolved: "...we need not understand the appropriation of power in the form of cognitive authority as intrinsic to science" as long as structures of cognitive authority can be changed (p. 118).

Bar On (1993) is also critical of epistemic privilege. She points out there is not a single, central power from which all oppressed groups are similarly marginalized, but multiple oppressive systems. Epistemic privilege, then, cannot be understood as the distance of a marginalized group from some central hub of power for there is no center. A second problem she raises is the multiplicity of socially marginalized groups – is one group more "epistemically privileged" than another? And what about those people who belong to more than one oppressed group – How is epistemic privilege worked out for them? She continues with an argument not unlike Longino's. Epistemic privilege, as the struggle to claim authority, is struggling for the very thing that lies at the root of

oppression: "...by claiming an authority based in epistemic privilege the group re-inscribes the values and practices used to socially marginalize it" (pp. 96-97).

Bar On's questions and issues were difficult for me to face. I was invested in the notion of epistemic privilege, in part because it fit with my long-standing theological commitments of a "preferential option for the poor" advocated by liberation theologies.[44] It also offered the leverage I had long sought to establish epistemological parity among dominant and subordinate groups. I did not want to let go, grieving the loss of epistemic privilege as many did the loss of Naususu. I argued with the epistemic privilege bashers: Epistemic privilege should not be understood as epistemic criterion but as epistemic corrective. Besides, if the epistemic privilege of "the oppressed" is gone, on what, then, does authority for their ways of knowing rest? What is left to safeguard "organic" ways of knowing whose space for articulation is shrinking? Perhaps, I thought, the "privileging" occurs discursively rather than epistemologically.

---

[44] Jesus' expression of his messianic calling in Luke 4 – "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." – is given an explicitly economic and political rather than spiritual interpretation by liberation theologians who claim that God makes a preferential option for the poor. (See Gutierrez, 1971; Fiorenza, 1981, particularly on "The 'Advocacy' Stance of Liberation Theologies," p. 93 ff.; Sobrino, 1985, particularly on Latin American Christology, p. 33 ff.; McGovern, 1989, especially "A New Way of Being Church," p. 197 ff. and "Toward a New Ecclesiology," p. 211 ff.). The expression "preferential option for the poor" is found in documents of the CELAM (Latin American Bishops' Conference) conference in Medellín, Colombia (1968) and Puebla, Mexico (1979) as social encyclicals of Pope John Paul II to emphasize the Catholic Church's commitment to the poor. It is not that the poor are more righteous than the non-poor, but given the reality of oppression, such a preference is demanded by the Gospel. Despite the fact poststructuralism had problematized the notion of "the poor" for me, I still clung to a concept of partiality for "the underdog" in my moral commitments. When it came to the concept of epistemic privilege as applied to oppressed and marginalized *masyarakat adat* in Indonesia, I had granted it even greater moral valence than liberation theologians have granted a preferential option for the poor. I understood epistemic privilege to mean *not only* a privileging demanded by conditions of oppression, *but also* a recognition that local ecological knowledges of *masyarakat adat* were morally superior to the *epistéme* of Enlightenment reason as expressed in discourses of development whose only interpretive lens sees the earth as resource to be exploited.

As I sensed myself being sucked into a whirlpool of esoteric theorizing before I had even reached the shores of cultural and economic violation that I also wanted to explore, I struggled to come up for air. Resurfacing, I saw Naususu jutting up from the horizon, still strong, yet diminished, her child rock Anjaf, laid bare beside her, 6 cubic foot blocks of marble scattered around their feet barely visible from where I bobbed. In the foreground I saw Tenau harbor.[45] *Dobonsolo*[46] had just docked and hundreds of passengers were choking the deck with their rafia-tied cardboard boxes and cheap luggage, waiting to disembark. At the other end of the dock was a cargo ship from Surabaya. I swam closer to bring into focus a truck, the tarp across its flatbed pulled back to reveal two large blocks of marble. A forklift rolled up, lifted one of the blocks onto its dolly, pulled around and drove up a short gang plank to deposit the block inside a shipping container on the ship's deck. As waves of epistemic privilege, authorized knowing subject, cultural feminism, and poststructual positionality lapped around me, I could barely make out the shouts of Timorese men and women. I couldn't see them, they were too far away, but I could hear them from the direction of Naususu, "*Haim tita*! *Haim tita*! *Haim tita*!" ("We reject! We reject! We reject!").[47]

---

[45] Tenau and Bolok, located about 10 km. west of Kupang on the tip of the island, are West Timor's two largest harbors.

[46] *Dobonsolo*, the biggest passenger ship to serve West Timor, makes a two week circuit that carries passengers back and forth between Kupang and Jakarta.

[47] The expression *Haim tita* is taken from a taped interview with Ana who, at my request, provided an account of the anti-mining demonstration that took place at Naususu in August 2000. As she explained,

> There were probably as many as a 1000 people gathered. They spontaneously arranged themselves into lines. The women entered the location first, the young men were at the back, and the old men were in the middle. So they moved forward to fight, screaming, "We don't agree with the mining. We demand you leave." KCN: How did it go again? "Haim Tita?" Ana: Yes, they shouted with the words, "*Haim tita*! *Haim tita*!" ...and "*I hai faut kanaf*," "This is our name rock." (interview, August 17, 2002)

Dripping wet and treading like crazy to keep my head above water, I realized that in my efforts to problematize resistance, I was making a distinction between epistemology and ethics that the resisting farmers of Mollo never did. They were never self-consciously engaged in pedagogy or learning, or reflexive about their ways of knowing. The point for the farmers was not knowledge so much as space, the physical and culturally discursive space needed to reclaim an identity that insists Naususu is milk, not marble.[48] Bobbing and panting, I realized it was I, not they, who posited resistance as a learning regime. It was I, not they, who chose to explore what the farmers "learned" from their experiences of resistance and what others might, in turn, be able to learn from an analysis of their resistance. "Just look," I thought, "at where this construction of 'learning resistance' has taken me." Having followed a path along the shoreline of learning and resistance at low tide, I had not adequately prepared myself to negotiate the tidal waves of epistemological jargon that had pulled me into water over my head. I knew how to swim, but I was beginning to tire.

What kept me afloat and guided me back to shore was the story with which I began. I needed to keep my eyes fixed on the story of Naususu to lead me back to shore, to the path that led to the hills where the farmers' agenda, at once political and ethical, was grounded in an identity and ways of knowing that did not separate them from the land, but made them an historic and semantic part of it. My attention shifted from an epistemological question, "How do the resisting farmers validate, claim authority, for what they know, particularly their historical and ecological knowledge tied to specific locations?" to ethical ones, "How does a community decide what is the right thing to do?

---

[48] As explained more fully in Chapter 4, Naususu literally means Nau's milk.

How is authority learned as authoring one's own existence?" – questions that brought me back to Freire (1968) who understands problem-posing education (not banking education), as the practice of freedom. I realized I didn't so much need to move beyond epistemology to ethics as to join the two.[49] For the farmers, to reject the mining was at once an epistemological and ethical act – to know was to resist. This synthesis was something I too wanted to claim.

By the last two chapters I was struggling, not to articulate a unified theory, not even, necessarily, to gain closure on questions raised along the way, but to return to the hills where I began to look again at the nuances of resistance located there. I did not set out on a mission of intellectual synthesis, but as I wrote, points I passed along my path began to look familiar. My study of various strategies of resistance, located at the site where expressions of local identity and local knowledge sought to unseat economic and political power, in turn became a gate that led to insights about *meto* ways of knowing. The former gave me reason to consider the latter. Some of the insights I have gained along the way have more to do with the nature of knowledge in a context of resistance than with resistance as learning regime. Recognizing distinctions and connections between the learning and knowing of resistance in Lelobatan, I began to build a bridge between the more practical science of education and the more theoretical science of epistemology that further broadened the analytical framework. However, it was the

[49] Although refocusing on the story of Naususu was primarily what drew me to reflect on the ethical dimensions of resistance, I was also helped by Bar On (1993) who argues that although self-empowerment is an important goal for all marginalized groups, the justification for disobedience to oppressive rules "is not a special kind of expertise guaranteed by epistemic privilege but rather by the demands of justice" (pp. 96-97).

moral clarity of the farmers who resisted the mining that kept me from drowning in a sea of theory and offered me a path to follow, ground on which to stand and to farm.

****

What began as an interest in learning the land shifted to an interest in learning resistance where resistance was the starting point for a critique of progress whose promises of economic development have been betrayed (Norgaard, 1994) by the multi-layered impact of environmental degradation on farming communities in West Timor. From this shift I moved on to consider not just *meto* ways of knowing, but *meto* ethical ways of knowing and living – knowing self, the land, and a way of life in which an economy of reciprocity has not been totally subsumed by one of profit. It is a way of life that relentlessly resists commodification and exploitation of not just the means of production, but the cultural and ecological means of identity. Commodification and exploitation are also there in *meto* practices of exchange – this is by no means a monolithic moral order. Yet, the resistance I witnessed suggests itself as a site for the study of values difficult to discover in a space where principles of reciprocity are no longer operative, and there is no identification with organic nature (Escobar, 1999). In this dissertation I privilege resistance as a site and regime of learning, as well as an *epistéme* and ethic, in part because resistance emphasizes the agency of the oppressed. When in the end I return to farming and learning about the land, I realize that for the farmers in Mollo, resistance is not just strategies to oppose marble mining, it is also a way of life.[50]

---

[50] I understand resistance as a way of life in two senses. The state has a history of intervening in the lives and space of *masyarakat adat*, seeking to control and govern them. In response, farmers throughout history have engaged in a range of strategies that resist state efforts to govern them and their resources. In one sense, then, resistance as a way of life points to this ongoing history of active resistance

Using the voice of autobiography, I begin Chapter 2 with a description of Heum, Lelobatan, the site from which I witnessed and, to some extent, participated in efforts to resist the mining of Anjaf-Naususu during the several months I lived there. I continue the story of resistance by juxtaposing NGO and farmer strategies. I then step back in Chapter 3 to describe, with a voice of the social activist, the larger national context in which the case is situated to consider ways the state has systematically violated the rights of *masyarakat adat*. Through a range of laws and policies, Indonesia has, over time, succeeded in weakening local social and political institutions to a point that farming communities are hard pressed to assert themselves against the state when their rights are violated. Included in this chapter is reflection on the ambivalent character of NGOs who seek to advocate on behalf of *masyarakat adat* while at the same time relating to them pedagogically in ways that would belie their solidarity. Switching voice yet again, applied this time to many characters performing on stage and in liminal space, Chapter 4 zooms in on the local context to foreground the ways in which women were involved in resistance to the mining. The context of resistance reveals how gender may cut both ways – on one hand, resistance makes possible both the transgression and the transformation of traditional gender roles; on the other, those roles are reinforced as the story of an anti-mining demonstration depicts.

---

to state interventions. Another sense in which resistance is a way of life does not emphasize the longevity of repeated acts of resistance, but rather emphasizes a way of life that doesn't acquiesce to state efforts to change it. The state may seek to manage or extract resources from traditional lands, alter farming practices so they are more "efficient," or try to change the means of production and exchange. However, in many important respects, those farmers who continue to farm as they always have and continue to practice an ethics of reciprocity keep part of their lives outside the scope of state efforts to govern them. It is a kind of resistance of stubbornness. These, then, are the two ways I conceptualize resistance as a way of life – undermining state projects that continually seek to bring *masyarakat adat* within their scope of governability, and refusal to acquiesce to such projects by not changing the way one lives.

Whereas Chapters 2, 3, and 4 consider the Anjaf-Naususu mining case in terms of critical pedagogy, Chapters 5 and 6 focus more on farmers' critical ways of knowing and being. In my analytic voice, I construct *meto* resistance as three, overlapping dimensions that relate to three, overlapping violations: recognition resists epistemological violation, rehearsal of local identity as expressed through a range of anti-mining actions resists cultural violation, and reciprocity resists the economic violations present in the mining of Anjaf-Naususu. With a voice of hope and vision, in Chapter 6 I explain what I advocate, namely a reduction of the gap between our material and discursive lives which, in the case of West Timor, means active participation of all peoples in subsistence farming.

During the years that it took those opposed to the mining to consolidate themselves into a moral community of opposition, individual groups of farmers in different hamlets at different times tried many resistance strategies. They wracked their memories, drew in church ministers and university professors, hiked days and nights to renew long-dormant West Timorese alliances, prayed, sacrificed chickens, planted curses, circulated petitions, and talked angrily and talked angrily and talked angrily to each other over many weeks and months about the mining. Through it all there was a degree of improvisation to their resistance. As the farmers sometimes made up history and interpretations, made up resistance as they went along, they also made up themselves. Rehearsals of resistance were at once rehearsals of identity. The mining of Naususu caused farmers to resist each other, splitting them into two camps. But it was also the occasion for them to form new relationships and reform old ones, relating to each other in new ways. For those farmers who resisted, the mining became the occasion for a revitalization of their community as a moral community, and this was how they became

catalysts capable of stopping the mining, even if both that particular community and closure of the mining might prove to be only temporary. Through various means of resistance these farmers not only challenged dominant economic and political interests, and the knowledge systems that support those interests, they challenged themselves as well. Unintentionally, surprisingly, the path comes full circle, and I realize that learning resistance means learning the land – learning its history, its composition, its boundaries, the life it supports, and how to establish a relationship of reciprocity with it through farming. These are lessons I want to keep learning from the farmers and the land of Mollo for what they teach us about surviving conflict and violence with our humanity – our integrity, our ability to dance and sing, our creativity, our particular identities and ecologies – intact.

CHAPTER 2

"DON'T BREAK THE EARTH AND EVERYTHING IN IT"

My ties to the Kune family[51] and the upland pastures and forests they inhabit around Heum, one of the hamlets in the village of Lelobatan, North Mollo, TTS, are strong. Since 1984, my family has frequented this hamlet, first as mountain retreat, and then second home as our understanding and experience of family grew to include an extended Timorese family who ritually adopted my husband, our two children, and me in 1991.[52] Whenever we had a chance to get away from our work in the provincial capital of Kupang, we usually went to Lelobatan.

Working together in corn, bean, and rice fields over the years, the Kunes and the Campbell-Nelsons grew close. My children came to understand collecting firewood and cooking over a wood fire, hunting for birds, bats, and civets, listening to elaborate prayers before watching skillful climbers go high in the trees of the forest to cut down huge hives of honey,[53] sowing, weeding, and harvesting, chasing and branding cows, dancing the *bonet* round dance at an occasional wedding, bathing in mountain streams, enduring

---

[51] The Kunes claim Portuguese ancestory, and say their family name was originally Kuneh, possibly derived from the Portuguese name Cunha. Still living head of the family, Grandpa Lasarus narrates a family migration beginning in Oecussi to the north and traveling via Noemuti to the east before some of the family settled close to Naususu Rock.

[52] My family and I moved to Kupang, West Timor, in 1983 to work with *Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor*, the second largest Protestant church in Indonesia, and its various institutions, including what is now a university, *Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana*. We have lived in West Timor since then except from 1995-1998 when I did graduate study in the US. Debora Kune, oldest child of Grandpa Sarus Kune and Marta Kosat, came to live and work with us, initially as a nanny and cook in 1983. Over the years our lives have become intertwined "for better, for worse." The mutual adoption of us and the Kune clan made their upland hamlet a convenient site for me to do field research.

[53] Sources on the history of trade in Indonesia and Timor indicate that beeswax, used for candles and batik, was a major Timorese export second only to sandalwood (van Leur, 1955; Ormeling, 1956; Boxer, 1968).

hours-long church services, listening to entertaining yarns and vicious gossip, using local remedies to treat scorpion and bee stings, fevers, and serious wounds, chewing betel nut – all of this they came to experience, not as exotic camping excursion or fascinating cultural experience, but as a way of life. We have spent too many hours of too many years working, playing, and praying in Lelobatan for it to be otherwise. This does not mean relations of power are absent among members of the Campbell-Nelson and Kune families, only that they have been, and continue to be, negotiated along somewhat unconventional lines.

It is little wonder we grew to love Lelobatan so much. About 4,200 feet above sea level, the Kune homestead offered a cool reprieve from our home on the coastal plains,[54] and its unfenced pastures and forests were an open invitation to explore and invent adventure. Lelobatan covers 39 square kilometres of forest, open savannah, and fields of corn, rice, peanuts, cassava, red beans, garlic, and carrots. Cultivated sections of forest include pepper and coffee bushes as well as a variety of trees – bamboo, coconut, kapok, cinnamon, and rarely sandalwood. Banana, avocado, papaya, jackfruit, various citrus, and betel nut trees surround individual dwellings. Lelobatan's numerous hamlets are nestled in valleys between rolling hills that have served as pasture since cattle were introduced in the early 1900s.[55] The native *alang-alang*, a long-stemmed savanna grass[56]

---

[54] Temperatures in Lelobatan range from 70-80 degrees Fahrenheit; on clear nights in May, June, July, and August – that gap between the dry and wet monsoons – it gets much cooler.

[55] The Dutch, aware that cattle were more resistant to disease, needed less feed, and had better-tasting meat than the water buffalo, that had long been in Timor, first sent cattle to Timor in 1912 (Ormeling, 1956).

[56] Ormeling (1956) identifies *alang-alang* as *imperata cylindrica* or, in the Philippines, *cogon*.

good for fattening cattle and essential for thatching the traditional round house (*ume kbubu*) and open-sided *lopo*, is fast disappearing as the *suf muti* bush (*Chromolaena odorata*) invades.[57] Streams fed by springs bubbling up at the foot of prominent mountain peaks cut paths through forest-covered mountains that lie along no particular axis, but rather form short ranges scattered in random fashion, mostly along the northern half of the island. After centuries of pressure and heat caused by two continental plates grinding together, the coral rock pushed up from an ancient seabed (marine fossils are common in the mountains of North Mollo) is now embedded with massive deposits of marble.

Guided by informative teachers, both young and old – Papa Tius, Mama Maria, Grandpa Sarus (Papa Tius's father) and others[58] – my family has learned the land around Lelobatan, its history and its people, by hiking the fields and forests for kilometers in many directions from the Kunes' hamlet of Heum. Included among sites we have learned over the years is a cluster of stunning rock outcroppings located just over the eastern ridge from the Kune hamlet, and not far to the south of *Gunung Mutis*, the heart of West

---

[57] *Chromolaena odorata* from the America tropics is the "worst weed threat to northern Australia" (McFadyen et al., 2000). Like a dandelion, the seeds of *suf muti* (in Indonesian, *bunga putih*, or white flower) are light and carry far with just a whiff of the wind. It is thought the plant came to Timor in the late 1960s by way of monsoon winds sweeping across the neighboring islands of Flores and Sumba to the west. Nearly 40% of Timor is savanna which is an ideal habitat for *chromolaena odorata* (Mudita, 1998). There are no data available to indicate whether or not introduction of the gall fly, the leaf-feeding butterfly, *Actinote anteas*, or the leaf-feeding moth, *Pareuchaetes pseudoinulata*, in NTT in recent years has had an impact on reducing this weed population.

[58] All names are pseudonyms except when I write about high-ranking public officials in West Timor, members of my own family, and, in Chapter 4, academics. I lived with Papa Tius and Mama Maria during my field research in 1999.

Timor's highland ecosystem.[59] The people of Mollo call the major peak of this cluster *Naususu* – "Nau's milk," but to the people of Amanuban, a Timorese tribe to the south, it is *fatu skau li ana* – rock that holds the child. Its sheer southern face is marked by white marble[60] that shows through the rock's darker, oxidized surface creating a dramatic contrast that accounts, in part, for the reference to milk and a nursing mother; the child in question refers to Anjaf, a smaller peak located slightly west of Nausus. Oral histories indicate that since ancient times the people of Timor believe that when dark clouds gather around Mount Mutis, God is preparing rain to fall for the people of Timor. Mount Mutis and the peaks scattered around it in a wide radius, including Naususu Rock, with thick forests covering the base of them, hold the rainwater, dispersing it through springs at their feet, water that is a blessing to all on the island.[61] That the rain follows a brutal dry season[62] is a sign corn and rice will grow again. Once the rains fall, the promise of life renewed is again fulfilled. This may also account for the maternal milk imagery evoked by the peak's name – not only is its milky face visible for miles around, it is known as a rock from which water, like milk, flows. Many a North Mollo Christian has good reason to believe their land, which includes trees seasonally laden with huge beehives, is the one depicted in the biblical promise of a land "flowing with milk and honey."

---

[59] *Gunung Mutis* (Mount Mutis), at 2427 meters above sea level, is the the tallest peak in West Timor and the second tallest on the entire island.

[60] White and salmon colored marble is most common among the peaks of North Mollo.

[61] Many of the peaks in North Mollo are rocks of marble. Springs that well up around the foot of these peaks form the headwaters of West Timor's major watershed.

[62] Timor is one of the driest islands in Indonesia (Ormeling, 1956), indeed, the name for Timor in *uab meto* is *pah meto* or dry land.

Learning the land of Anjaf-Nausus (Figure 2), my husband once made it to the top of Naususu, an event that has an assured place in our family's oral history. On several other occasions he and I were shown a cave located part way up Anjaf. Descending a sharp slope we found pottery fragments and a stalagmite that was, we were informed, the statue of a Timorese warrior. Caves in the crooks and crannies of Anjaf and Naususu once held pottery fragments and stones used as gongs, tables, and for ritual animal sacrifice. That Anjaf-Naususu is mentioned not only in North Mollo oral histories, but also in the oral histories of the people of Amanuban and Amarasi is evidence of the peaks' broad cultural significance.[63] Their historical and cultural significance is accentuated by their personification as mother and child and this has traditionally lent an air of sacredness both to the peaks and to the land around them (Figure 4).

In 1992 the commons to the north of Anjaf-Naususu, used for several generations as pasture for cattle, was forcibly fenced off for a government HTI project (*hutan tanaman industri*, industrial forest plantation). To protect tree seedlings from cattle, the government urged local farmers to fence and farm some of the land for the first few years after the project began, but this was understood to be a short-term arrangement. Once the trees were tall, sunlight would no longer reach crops planted under them. So, for the first time in remembered or orally recorded history, the soil around Anjaf-Naususu was

[63] Mount Mutis is thought by some to be the peak from which ancient Timorese leaders divided up the lands of Timor among the various tribes (Benofinit, 1972); others, such as those who recite history in Chapter 4, believe this historic event occurred on Mount Mollo. What makes Naususu a bit different is that the rock's name, associated as it is with a nursing mother, insures a reasonable degree of consensus about its socio-cultural significance.

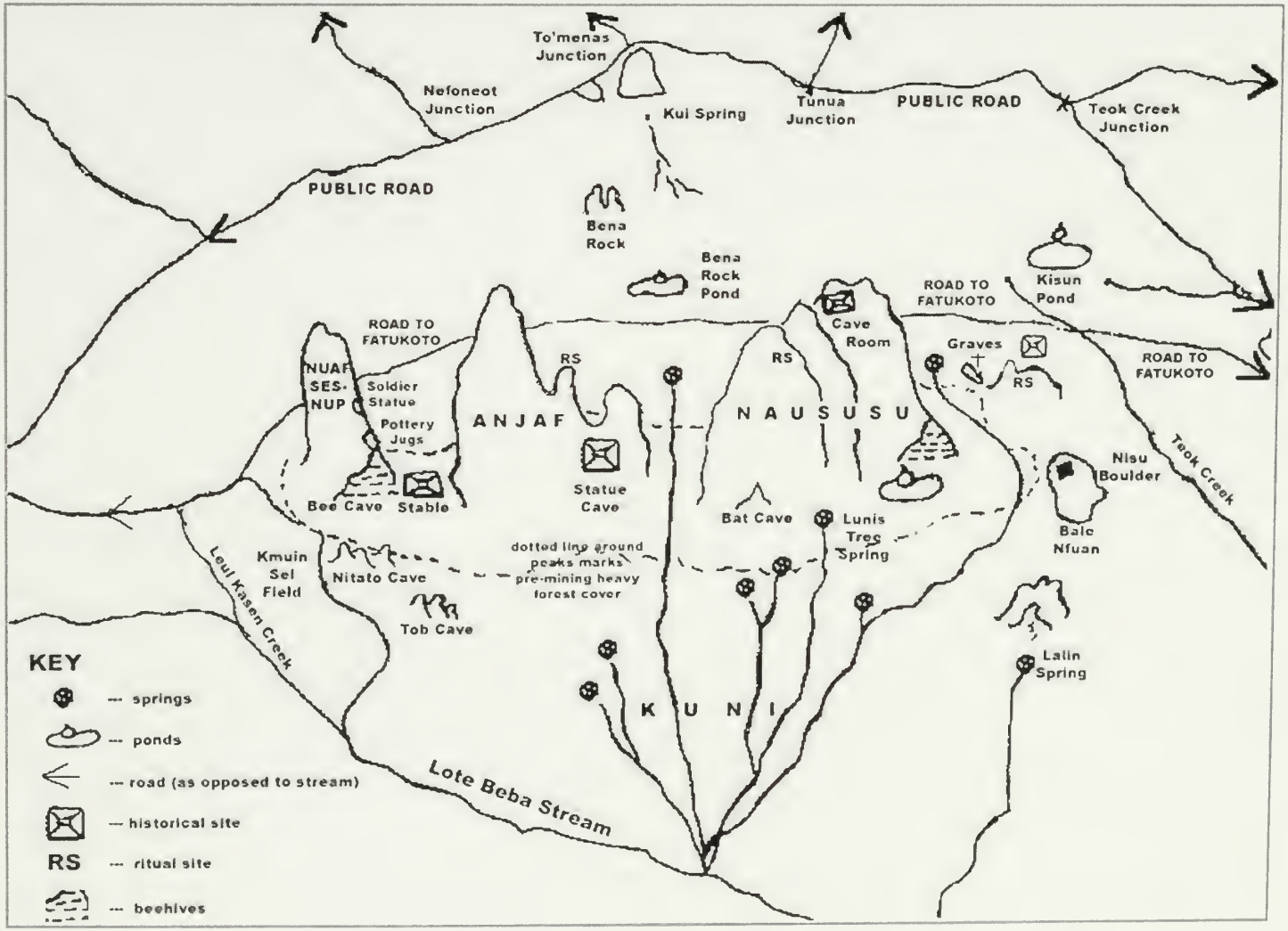

Figure 2: Sketch Map of Anjaf-Naususu

turned, exposed to the sun, and planted with mahogany and *ampupu* trees,[64] corn and cassava. In this way, capitalist and organic regimes of nature (Escobar, 1999) confronted each other in new ways in these highlands of West Timor. Some local farmers participated in this conversion of land use, happy to have access to newly turned land that promised higher food yields. Other farmers were deeply disturbed by it and used strategies of resistance they would repeat years later in opposition to the marble mining. After a long struggle of push and pull, HTI workers were finally chased away in the mid-1990s and this particular Forestry Department project at Anjaf-Naususu abandoned.[65]

I knew about the HTI struggle, even witnessed resistance to it,[66] but after moving to the US in 1995 for graduate study lost touch both with the case and the Kune family. In November 1998, I sat half a world away from Lelobatan, furiously composing my comprehensive exam paper. I described centuries of sandalwood marketing and what I could learn about recent industrial forest plantations, drawing pictures of a capitalist

---

[64] North Mollo forests include giant ampupu trees. This fire-resistant eucalyptus grows to 70-80 meters in height. Ampupu is found on only a few islands in eastern Indonesia such as West Timor, West Papua, and some of the Molucca islands.

[65] Although a history of Forestry Department initiatives throughout Mollo is beyond the scope of this paper, it should be noted that for years the relationship between Department officials and farmers has been something of a song and dance, often marked by tensions. In 2002, some local farmers, much to the chagrin of other local farmers, coaxed a Forestry Department official into granting permission for a large section of traditionally protected eucalyptus forest to be opened for swidden (slash and burn) cultivation.

[66] A common resistance strategy of farmers in TTS, particularly when it comes to government projects, is to accept such projects in order to undermine them. J. Campbell-Nelson (1998) describes how farmers resisted this particular HTI project. By assuring the government they would support the project, farmers in turn got the government to agree it would not fell existing trees as had become common practice with Forestry Department projects of all kinds. Farmers then "scared off the workers the forestry department had hired to do the fencing and planting and offered to do the work themselves. This they did, but they placed the fence posts only a few inches deep; during the day they planted seedlings and at night they let their cattle in. When a seedling began to grow, a gentle tug on the stem was enough to break the root hairs. They prayed to God to withhold the rain, and God apparently obliged, for the following two years saw an uncharacteristic drought" (p. 46).

regime of nature in South Central Timor (Campbell-Nelson, 1998), knowing I would soon return to the hills of which I wrote.[67]

Anticipated reunion with friends and family in Timor spurred my writing. What I didn't know at that time was that Anjaf-Naususu had already been targeted for another project in the name of development, one that was to influence the focus of my field research in the coming year. During the years I was in the US, the TTS regency government, with full support of the NTT provincial government, had opened up North Mollo to surveyors in search of valuable ore and mineral deposits. By mid-November 1997 it was announced that five companies were ready to exploit marble found in five North Mollo villages covering a total of 183.5 hectares ("Warga Molo Utara diminta," 1997). Large deposits, estimated to produce for up to 200 years ("Potensi Marmer," 1997), promised even larger profits. In Indonesia, marble is in the lowest tax bracket, classed together with sand and ordinary rock, presumably as an incentive to attract investors. With a market value of anywhere from 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 *rupiah*/cubic meter, a tax of only 7,000 to 40,000 *rupiah*/cubic meter,[68] and an estimated 640,968,000 cubic meters ("Deposit marmer," 1998) of marble available in TTS, mining companies

---

[67] By choosing Lelobatan as the site for my field research, I opted for familiarity over novelty. My history of trusted relationships with farmers there gave me access to what Scott (1990) calls "hidden transcripts of the subordinate," something that came to play a larger role in my analysis than I had originally imagined.

[68] My two sources for information about how much money marble mining companies must pay in taxes to the government are verbal. Ana, a key anti-mining organizer, told me that in an early protest meeting (2000) with the TTS *Bupati* at his office in Soe, she was told by the *Bupati* that PT. Karya Asta Alam was paying the government 7,000 rupiah/m^3 as PAD (Local Sources of Revenue). Then, at a meeting she attended at Undana National University in February 2001, at which the university's environmental impact team reported on a current marble mining project in the South Mollo village of Fatumnutu, a tax of 14,000 rupiah/m^3 was mentioned. Most recently she has heard the tax is 40,000 rupiah/m^3. This last figure matches information from a recent Undana University graduate who wrote his thesis on the mechanics of marble mining. This graduate was also the same source of information about the current market value of marble in rupiah.

stand to make huge profits. Of course government officials providing access to these deposits would deserve signs of gratitude, and this provides the incentive for keeping the tax rate on marble so low – the lower the tax, the higher "gratuities" are likely to be. That marble mining is relatively lucrative also explains, perhaps, why other schemes of economic growth in TTS, such as HTI, were sent to the back burner. In the coming years, government officials would be vocal in promoting mining as the panacea to boost regency income to a level that promised prosperity not just for the people of TTS, but for the entire NTT province ("Sembilan jenis," 2000).[69]

Thus, while I sat in Massachusetts, conditions for ecological devastation were being created in the Kune's back yard. A permit to mine Anjaf-Naususu was first issued in mid-December 1997. Early in 1998, an export target of 3000 blocks of marble was proudly announced, and by April it was reported that President Suharto himself would preside at a June ceremony to celebrate the first export of marble rock. Had Suharto not been forced to resign in May 1998, it is possible the NTT and TTS governments would have been more forceful in quelling resistance to the mining. Instead, a groundswell of protest by local farmers, including a number from Fatukoto, the settlement located directly at the southern foot of Anjaf-Naususu, managed to shut down the mining by August 1998. When I arrived in West Timor in January 1999, activists and farmers who had participated in the protest still spoke with pride about their victory.

As it turned out their victory was short-lived. On May 21, 1999, several months after I arrived in Lelobatan to carry out my fieldwork, two men claiming to represent

---

[69] Passage of new Regional Autonomy (*Otda*) legislation in 1999 means, among other things, that subsidies from the central government to regional governments are to be cut and the latter must now develop their own revenue from local resources.

local *adat* leaders signed over both the child rock, Anjaf, and its mother, Naususu to the director of a different mining company, PT. Karya Asta Alam (KAA).[70] One of these two men was the former TTS *Bupati* (Regent), and the other was Ben, the son of the last widely respected king of North Mollo, Sem Oematan. This written agreement also carried signatures of the Speaker of the TTS People's Assembly and the current TTS *Bupati*, the two highest-ranking political officials in TTS.

Those eager to profit from mining these rocks had lost little time in applying lessons learned from the failed attempt in 1998. The first mining company that was ousted in 1998 had agreed in writing not to touch Naususu Rock. When it did so, it broke contract, and this became the legal basis on which that contract was finally revoked. During the second mining attempt, this time by PT. KAA in 1999, the written agreement states that the signatories are handing over *Fatu* Gong (Gong Rock), *Fatu* Anjaf (Anjaf Rock), and *Nuat* Ni Toto (Ni Toto Cave) for marble mining (*Surat Pernyataan Kesepakatan*, 1999). This impies that Naususu, the arguably more "sacred" of the Anjaf-Naususu pair, is once again to remain undisturbed. However, a close reading of the environmental impact study (PT. Karya Asta Alam, 1999) indicates that Gong Rock (1.260.000 cubic meters) is many times larger than Anjaf (360.000 cubic meters). The only peak in the vicinity of the marble mining larger than Anjaf is Naususu. Apparently

[70] PT. KAA is a subsidiary of PT. Citatah marble mining company which adversises itself as the oldest and largest marble producer in Indonesia, with 25 years of commercial experience (http://www.citatah.co.id/about_us.html). The Chair of Citatah's Supervisory Board, a Director of Citatah's Board of Management, and the Director of PT. KAA all have the same family name.

those who drew up this contract sought to gain access to Naususu simply, but covertly, by changing its name to Gong Rock.[71]

Before marble can be mined, forests that cover marble peaks must first be cleared, not only from the surface of the rock but also on the land around its base. After the rock and area around it have been cleared and a water source secured, heavy mining equipment – channeling machines, drills, and iron blades – is brought in. I never witnessed the mining at Anjaf-Naususu, but a Britannica CD ROM (2002) describes a process similar to the one I heard from a distance. A channeling machine with a chisel-edged steel bar makes cuts, or channels, about 5 cm wide and a few meters deep. Wherever possible, the cuts follow natural joints already present in the rock to make splitting easier. The marble blocks outlined by joints and cuts are separated by driving wedges into intermittently-spaced holes that have been drilled into the marble. Slabs of marble are then carved out with sets of parallel iron blades whose back and forth movement must be lubricated by sand and water. To separate the block of rock from its base, horizontal holes are drilled beneath the block and wedges driven into them. The separated slabs, usually long rectangles weighing several tons, are then cut into more convenient blocks. At Anjaf-Naususu, three to four cubic meter blocks were lifted onto trucks and immediately transported to Kupang's harbor about four hours away where they were shipped to Surabaya on the island of Java for further cutting and polishing.

---

[71] Those who read a photocopy of the signed agreement never questioned the reference to Gong Rock even though the actual Gong Rock, well known to everyone in Lelobatan, is not a marble peak, but a small boulder at least five kilometers from Naususu that sounds like a gong when it is struck. Had the name switch been realized earlier, resisters could have argued, as they did in 1998, that when the current mining company began to take marble from Naususu it breached its contract since there is no mention of Naususu. However, this semantic debate was never part of the resistance because the name change was not discovered until nearly a year after the second round of mining had already been brought to a halt in mid-2000.

Anjaf-Naususu are typical of tower karst, hard stone that "separates into isolated blocks as it weathers" (Tarbuck & Lutgens, 2000, p. 302).[72] Whereas more porous limestone is slowly dissolved, the solid marble of Anjaf-Naususu resists dissolution to form a lip to a once-soggy basin of underground water on its north side. Although it is too soon to tell what the long-term ecological impact of the Anjaf-Naususu mining will be, common sense suggests that if the one hard rock on the edge of this steep drop-off is removed, there will be nothing to hold the groundwater that feeds streams and rivers below. Disruption to these headwaters will likely contribute to intensifying Timor's already serious drought problems and massive erosion of land during the harsh monsoons during the rainy season.[73]

During my fieldwork in the village of Lelobatan, I lived in Heum, a hamlet only a few kilometers from Anjaf-Naususu. Every single day, even Sundays, I heard what the farmers I lived with heard – power saws ripping away centuries of forest cover, bulldozers tearing up the ground to build an access road around the base of Anjaf, chiseling machines cutting into the rock, the slush of water and sand that cooled the drills and blades. I saw what the farmers saw – clouds of marble dust blowing into the valley below once the eastern monsoon winds (dry and hot off the Australian desert) gained momentum, a naked rock face with chunks of marble littering its base, huge, 10-wheeled

---

[72] Karst topography is formed when rainwater that has picked up carbon dioxide from the air and organic matter on the surface of the earth becomes groundwater with small amounts of carbonic acid. This acid reacts with calcite in limestone to form calcium bicarbonate which is soluble. In this way, limestone just below the earth's surface is dissolved resulting in sinkholes that may appear as either small indentations in the earth or be quite large. In such topography, ponds are often sinkholes that have become plugged with clay and then eventually fill with rainwater. There are signs of sinkholes as well as cavernous limestone throughout North Mollo.

[73] Another environmental hazard is air pollution caused by air-born dust created by drilling.

Fuso trucks transporting blocks of marble, a stray block here and there along the roadside that had toppled from a truck. Beginning in May 1999 and for months afterwards the noise from Anjaf-Naususu was a daily reminder that this preserve of flora and fauna, a crucial means of water, oxygen, and soil conservation in West Timor, was being destroyed. The noise itself became invasive for it would not permit me to forget, even for a moment, what was happening.

Resistance in the Field

The exploitation of Anjaf-Naususu had a significant impact on my research and learning, in part because my feelings about the mining were no secret. Even after I recognized the liabilities of being too intimately associated with resistance to the mining[74] and so adjusted my expressed research agenda accordingly, the case continued to distract me from other research threads I might have pursued while in the field. Only when I began to study my data some time later did I realize it held clues about the learning that occurs within a context of resistance. This discovery led me to develop further questions. What were the people of Lelobatan learning or relearning through their opposition to the mining, and how?

I discovered one such clue that pointed to learning and resistance in a journal entry written about halfway into my fieldwork:

---

[74] Several times during my stay with Papa Tius and Mama Maria in Lelobatan, Papa Tius urged my family not to visit me as my husband had been labeled by local supporters of the mining as a primary sponsor of anti-mining efforts. Since my family came and went in a red, hardtop Toyota Land Cruiser, and could be easily identified as the only white people who regularly visited the area, their presence was difficult to hide. Once I realized my anti-mining sentiments might make life difficult for the Kunes, and that I might also jeopardize research permits I had been issued by the government, I bent over backwards to establish my disinterest in the mining. Of course when alone with my hosts, I did not attempt to sustain this charade that, in any event, probably never fooled anyone.

> So, is this the beginning of the end of my research? Papa Tius and I both realize there is no easy way to know who has and hasn't "sold out." It feels like there were some who held out [against the mining] for awhile, but when no immediate resistance was in place and as the "sacredness" of the rock becomes more diminished with every tree that is felled, well they probably figure they should try to get what they are able to get as long as they can get it. But in such an atmosphere it is quite possible that potential informants will begin to shut me out. So what to do? The level of trust involved in research is something I hadn't considered as much as I ought.
>
> July 20, 1999

I wrote this passage upon return from a physically and emotionally exhausting trip to Fatukoto when an utter sense of betrayal threatened to undo me. Earlier that day I had hiked nearly two hours from Heum to Fatukoto with a few men opposed to the mining, to attend a meeting with a group of professors from the UKAW[75] theology faculty where my husband John was teaching full-time. It was he who first suggested a visit by the professors to speak with elders in Fatukoto. The intended strategy was to use UKAW theology faculty to legitimate Naususu as a religious site in the same way that a research team from Undana University in Kupang,[76] hired to carry out the environmental impact study mandated by the government, was being used to legitimate it as a mining site. Like I, members of the theology faculty also had anthropological interest in documenting local articulations of what Anjaf-Nausus means to the people who live around it. Having observed how opposition to the mining provided impetus for the revitalization of local traditions and beliefs, at least among the opposition, I thought the presence of respected professors from the church's university would invite farmers who had been afraid to

---

[75] UKAW, *Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana*, Artha Wacana Christian University, provided the institutional umbrella for my research.

[76] Undana is short for *Universitas Cendana*, or Sandalwood University, the Kupang branch of the state university. It is the largest and oldest university in NTT.

express their disgruntlement about the mining to open up. If so, there was a good chance that a history of Anjaf-Naususu might emerge and could be recorded. I had high hopes for this meeting that had been planned together with several local leaders.

It was late morning by the time my hiking companions and I arrived on the outskirts of Fatukoto. I increased my pace to find out if the professors had arrived yet from Kupang, barely noticing that several who had hiked with me hung back. At the time I did not realize they were clued in to something I was not. Shortly after one of my research assistants and I reached the church where the meeting was to be held, the professors arrived. Uncharacteristically there was no reception of any kind for them, but I figured people were busy helping the new pastor who had just moved to town the day before. As we sat in the church with only four or five farmers, waiting for others to arrive, one of the farmers explained the poor turnout: two days earlier word had gone out that the meeting would not happen. At least two versions of the cancellation had circulated. According to one, this meeting could only happen in the TTS regency capital of Soe with the *Bupati* present since he was the one ultimately responsible for the mining. A second version suggested the meeting had been called off because the professors required permission from the police before they would be allowed to enter the area. Neither rumor was true, but each served its purpose. Hardly anyone came to the meeting. As I learned later, it had been thwarted by the very people in Fatukoto with whom it had been planned; people who, until that moment, had led me to believe they were opposed to the mining. Even before opponents to the mining had a chance to consolidate their efforts, it seemed the resistance had been undermined by a well-orchestrated rumor campaign initiated by other local farmers.

That day I learned that "arts of resistance" (Scott, 1990) may also be arts of domination. In a chapter on how subordinate groups "insinuate their resistance...into the public transcript" (p. 136), Scott identifies rumor as a means of political disguise whereby oppressed groups are able to make strategic use of anonymity to serve their purposes.[77] However, in the case of the failed meeting in Fatukoto, rumors had been used on behalf of a dominant group. By effectively preventing those opposed to the mining from coming together to reveal their various hidden transcripts, something that might have encouraged more open rebellion, proponents of the mining maintained a position of power.

Among those whose rumors had successfully undermined the meeting were tribal leaders who, several months earlier, had attended a gathering in the home of Papa Tius and Mama Maria at which I introduced my research, at that time still focused on "learning the land." The contempt these men expressed for the mining at that time had been convincing, among other reasons because I knew they had been among those who resisted the mining in 1998. That they lived in Fatukoto, the hamlet directly at the foot of Anjaf-Naususu, was important; if these elders managed to again hold strong in their resistance to the mining, it would encourage others further from the peaks to join again in protest. What I did not know was that several months earlier these men had already been approached by Ben (one of the signatories to the contract with the mining company, p. 58 above) and had agreed to give their support to a new round of mining. The unveiling of a previously "hidden transcript" (Scott, 1990) of resistance to the mining through public

---

[77] Scott points out, for example, that in the Caribbean during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rumors often circulated that the king had abolished slavery, but that the white people were keeping this news a secret. Such rumors served to justify slave rebellions.

demonstrations in 1998 proved beneficial to those who remained resolute in their drive to mine Anjaf-Naususu. Once opponents to the mining became known in public, they could be "atomized" – individually approached and persuaded to change their position. By the time mining was resumed in 1999, not only had the face of the mining company changed, so had the face of the opposition. With the former opposition now divided and some of its most vocal opponents shifting their position to support the mining, stakes for a second round of resistance were raised. By at first pretending to oppose the mining, the farmers who had already joined with the politically and economically dominant group to support the mining were for a time able to gain acceptance in the social space of a subordinate group. In retrospect, their presence at the presentation of my research seemed an act of espionage, and I was devastated by the possible consequences.

To add insult to injury, the environmental impact research team of Undana professors unexpectedly made an appearance in Fatukoto that day, purportedly to find out why the theology professors were there. In the ensuing debate it became evident the Undana professors were intent on keeping criticism of the mining on a short leash. They explained there were no plans to use dynamite in the mining as had been rumored, but that a more environmentally friendly cut and slice method was to be used. They informed us the operational permit that gave the final, official green light for the mining to proceed had been signed by the TTS *Bupati*.[78] The team also shared its conclusion that negative impacts of the mining were far too minimal to outweigh the huge long-term

[78] Several legal infractions occurred in relation to the mining of Anjaf-Nausus. Neither mining nor preparations for it should have begun prior to issuance of the operational permit (signed on July 1, 1999), yet I had heard bulldozers working nearly every day since mid-May. The operational permit, in turn, should not have been issued prior to completion of the environmental impact study by this research team. It would be at least another month before their study would be released. Nor should the environmental impact research team have been hired and paid by the mining company.

profits it promised. When challenged about the sacredness of the peaks, the Undana professors discounted it, arguing they were ancient beliefs no longer held by Christians. In all, their message was clear, albeit indirect – whatever efforts might be made to try and halt the mining would be too little too late.

I regret I did not make a tape recording of this debate. One reason I held back was that the confrontation came at the exact moment I began to realize the magnitude of the issue as well as the various forms of domination being deployed in this struggle for access to resources. At the time I feared that were I to pull out my recorder and place it before the Undana professors, word would reach government officials that, under the guise of academic research, I was organizing local villagers to resist the mining. At the moment I decided not to use my recorder, I acquiesced to a public transcript whereby academic environmental research was being used to serve the economic interests of a dominant group. My fears of reprisal had I taken a more open stance against the mining that day may not have been exaggerated. Had a number of farmers opposed to the mining convened in Fatukoto that day, violence might have erupted. I was later told that the youth playing volleyball in front of the church the entire time the professors and I were in Fatukoto had gathered in anticipation of an anti-mining demonstration by youth from as far away as Kupang. No doubt such anticipation had been fed by yet one more rumor.

Following the trip to Fatukoto, with its revelation of betrayal and the clear drawing of "pro" and "con" lines, I had to acknowledge on the one hand that my hopes for recording a locally generated "authentic" oral history of the area had been somewhat opportunistic. I wanted to take advantage of resistance to the renewed mining of Anjaf-

Naususu in order to collect data. I had to ask myself if one reason I had up to that point been so vocal in my opposition to the mining was because it endeared me to those who seemed to be resurrecting buried history. On the other, I was at once shocked, offended, and humiliated at having been so thoroughly taken in by local farmers who had pretended to oppose the mining. By being their dupe, I had made visible individuals and an institution (UKAW) that would now be identified as opposed to the mining, a visibility that mining supporters knew might again work to their advantage as it had in the past.[79]

I realized that my temptation to throw in the towel partway through my field research might fit some predictable pattern of graduate student field experience, but it was no comfort. Even now the frequency of the phrase "research blues" that I later added to the margins of my journal to mark one of the recurring themes in it is daunting. It seemed I had been floating on a bubble where field research coincided with my passion to help alter an environmental debacle. The failed Fatukoto meeting popped it. Again I asked myself what I was hoping to learn from doing research in this time and place. Had following my heart to document opposition to the mining led me too far astray from my research proposal? It wasn't just a meeting that had failed; I felt I had failed.

When I returned to my journal entry of July 20, 1999 (quoted above) I discovered two clues that relate to learning and resistance. One is the date. July 20, 1999 is not the last journal entry as I had feared; the last entry is January 8, 2000. Despite the soul

---

[79] The issue of trust and betrayal did not cut neatly along lines of pro and contra positions towards the mining. About a year after I left the village, it became clear that involvement by one of the LSM activists and his local ally in the resistance had been blatant self-aggrandizement. Although he was not secretly supporting the mining, he used his involvement in the resistance to try to establish a local base for exploiting the farmers in various ways. This became clear when Papa Tius, who was suspicious about the intentions of the activist, began to have him shadowed. I had to repeatedly remind myself to be careful whenever trying to draw lines between the dominant and subordinate and their allies since they could be easily confused.

searching prompted by the Fatukoto disaster, I managed to continue my field research. The second clue comes from my recognition of the role trust plays in research. The question I ask now about the challenge I faced then is: How did I resist the temptation to quit? What helped to move me beyond the blues of betrayal? The answer, I discovered, was about trust and the transmission of values. Trust was there, just not where I had been looking for it.

NGO Strategies of Resistance

After a long hike back from Fatukoto to Heum, made longer and harsher by the day's disappointments, and a restless night in which I wondered what my research could possibly mean in the face of such foregone environmental catastrophe, I listened the next day to an interview taped in Fatukoto the night before the professors and I had arrived. My daughter Katie, at the time 15, and a couple of her friends from Lelobatan had accompanied a fourth young woman, Lidia, to Fatukoto. Lidia was from a Kupang-based NGO and wanted a better picture of what people in Fatukoto thought about the mining.

Lidia's NGO had played an influential role in helping to organize opposition to the mining in 1998 and staff were eager to see masses of farmers again launch a demonstration. Like I, staff members of this NGO did not initially understand that a number of *adat* elders opposed to the mining in 1998 had "switched sides" and were now prepared to actively support the mining. Because Lidia did not speak *uab meto* and was not used to long treks through mountain forests, she needed help from those familiar with the language and the land. Thus a group of young women held an interview with several men in Fatukoto. As I listened to the recording of this interview my despair began to lift,

not because there were people in Fatukoto ready to oppose the mining – there weren't – but because there were those ready to challenge the lack of such opposition.

The tape begins with the sound of nervous laughter, mostly from the young women, although some men make a few wise cracks. The men are hesitant to talk, but Lidia persists with her questions. The men begin to explain how the head of their village had officially handed over Anjaf to a Taiwanese company to be mined in 1998.

> **MAN 1**: We already surrendered it before...Our village head turned it over to the work supervisor to manage Anjaf, but what they mined was only Naususu so that it burned; it didn't happen.
> **LIDIA**: This time it's Anjaf with, uh, Naususu?
> **MAN 1**: Just Anjaf.
> **LIDIA**: O, just Anjaf? They haven't done the other one yet? But according to the plan, they'll both be mined, won't they?
> **MAN 1**: I don't know that Nausus will be touched; what I know is that only Anjaf is to be mined.

Mollo farmers had ample opportunity to hone their negotiation skills vis-à-vis the mining in their region. Here we see some farmers who seem to want a middle ground between government pressures to support the mining (and, more broadly, to support economic growth) and pressures by other farmers and NGOs to oppose the mining on cultural and ecological grounds. In return for their agreement to mine Anjaf, these farmers always stressed that Naususu was not to be touched. It seems this was how these farmers sought to strike a balance between competing values of history and commerce – Anjaf for the miners, Naususu for the resisters. In this way they could claim they were supporting the government's plan for regional development while at the same time claim they had not sold out the most sacred peak of the cluster. Lidia continues, trying a scare tactic that doesn't seem to work.

> **LIDIA**: That's just it. Later they'll begin working [on the other one], sirs; they'll use explosives to break up the rock.

MAN 1: We haven't yet heard that one, miss, so...
LIDIA: Yep, so now I'm telling you, sirs. Those explosives could be dangerous for people around here, you know.
MAN 1: Like me who lives close. I could be the first to die. [People laugh and joke about death by explosives.]

When Lidia asks about the building of a new road through Fatukoto, a nerve is hit and there is the first hint that farmers in Fatukoto may not be all that pleased about the latest deal that has been struck with PT. Karya Asta Alam.

MAN 2: If the marble [miners], for example, open a road that goes through people's yards [and destroys trees and plants in them], will there be compensation or not? Other men chime in: That's right. We'd like to know.

Then my daughter takes her oppositional stand. Her concern about the impact on animal species seems to provide comic relief.

MAN 1: Now, about this marble, frankly, we don't yet, we haven't yet observed...what it is up to. That's the way it is.
KATIE: But if you just sit around, in time the rock will disappear and then the people will also have to leave...If you all just sit here, the rock won't be here any longer, and there won't be any more money from the rock either. ...Probably now, or in the near future, is the time for people to speak up, because the mining has begun. If you go look at Nausus, they're working on it all the time. Every day you can hear them working, they're cutting down trees. It's already started. You know...what day was it? I went to take pictures there and I saw a lot of people had already started to cut away at the rock. For sure the monkeys, the animals in the forest, it's certain they aren't there any longer. [People break out in laughter.]
MAN 3: Probably when they heard humans making noise...they hid.
MAN 1: They probably ran off to Kupang Regency! [lots of laughter] They hear human voices, and all the other racket, they peal out of there.
MAN 4: At Nausus there are probably only monkeys and muskrats. But there aren't any other animals.

Lidia then gives legal advice, trying to impress on the farmers the need to keep track of what happens with the mining and to always pressure the mining company to put its promises in writing so it can be held legally accountable to them. This leads to the most important part of the exchange where farmers disclose some of their real concerns about the mining.

MAN 3: We don't want a repeat of what happened before with those guys from Taiwan. They made these great promises – want a new road, a church, a school, electricity? So we gave them the marble. In the end they didn't mine Anjaf, but took it from Nausus [so that] in the end it didn't work out.
LIDIA: We can learn from that experience, sirs. That's experience for us, isn't it? Be careful lest it happen like that again.
MAN 1: Don't worry. The people around here have already made a statement with them...so that all institutions will know that the people here want this and this and this...
MAN 3: You know, I was just sitting by myself the other day and thinking...We need to gather together our people...again. How do we handle things since the investor has already started to [mine] the rock? But [we should gather] so that we'll all know what percent is for the people, what percent for the government, and what percent goes to the investor.
LIDIA: Yeah, it should be like that, sir.
MAN 3: Now, I'll tell you, up to now there hasn't yet been a meeting with the people to let them know how much money they will get.
LIDIA: But that's possible. Sirs, you can voice your concerns, probably through your traditional leaders. I think through that channel you could do something...If we are on our own, that is difficult. They won't listen to our voices. But if we try to go at this together, by using our traditional leaders to gather us together, then through them...what do you think?
MAN 3: They've never called our elders, yeah, to inform them, so...we should gather, say, to reach a consensus that things should be like this and this.
MAN 1: An agreement.
MAN 5 (*in a very soft voice difficult to hear*): I think this is good right now. Their coming [meaning the young women] here is a good thing. They came so that we might understand. If not, all of our people might (*his voice fades to an inaudible level).*
LIDIA: Now, if there's something that isn't good, you need to speak up immediately. Perhaps through a church organization that's possible. So we'll form some groups before we engage in an action. Now's the time to just take action. Now is when we must demo...How is it that students could bring down Mr. President, and we can't? That's true, yeah? Because what we're dealing with is pretty small, isn't that right, sirs?
MAN 4: We don't know, miss, because our brains are ones that just "go along," so we're just "yeah, yeah" all the time.
MAN 1: That's why we have to hope for a provocateur, someone out in front. If we just grumble from the sidelines and then advance and speak out openly, that's dangerous... So there has to be one person out front, then there must be recognition among the people that, o, he's smart.

Lidia's attempt to discursively link resistance to this specific mining case in West Timor with the nationalist movement for reform that brought down President Suharto is

an example of what Tambiah (1996) calls nationalization and parochialization: an issue that arises in a specific context seeks to "adapt... and concretize... the national cause to suit... [its] local political context... and contingencies" (p. 257). What Lidia fails to consider is that student activists (like herself) based in Kupang and farmers living in Fatukoto have quite different relationships to Indonesian national politics. The top-down, center-to-periphery appeal to nationalist reform that Lidia invokes will not be heard by these farmers in the same way she intends. Nevertheless, the patient persistence of Lidia and the other interviewers eventually moved these men from stonewalling the conversation to surprising openness about some of their questions and reservations regarding the mining.

As I listened to the young women's simple courage, it affirmed my own sense of purpose. That my daughter participated with comments of her own about the destruction of native habitat offered special insight to me. I can never know how much I had to do with her embracing values of importance to me, but that I could tell myself this was the case – that values can and do "rub off" – helped me to re-engage with my research even as I made a determined decision to keep my distance from all further activities and public conversations related to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu. I say determined, yet I continued to record conversations and activities of those opposed to the mining, at first from a greater emotional distance and then from a greater physical distance. I was not to be in Lelobatan much longer. The post referendum violence in East Timor that spilled over into West Timor precipitated my sudden and unplanned departure from the hills of Mollo in early September 1999. But in July of that year I was still engaged with the more local

mining drama, one that for the most part, and quite unlike the East Timor crisis, remained far from international scrutiny.

The repertoire of resistance I observed during my time in Lelobatan was to become more varied and complex as the mining of Anjaf-Naususu continued. Although the visit to Fatukoto by UKAW professors suggested some kind of public outcry from GMIT or UKAW might be forthcoming,[80] such public opposition by these institutions never crystallized. There were, however, at least two different groups who actively sought to rally support in opposition to the mining. One group was comprised of activists affiliated with NGOs based in West Timor who were concerned about environmental and land tenure issues. A second more obscure vein of resistance was that of farmers in North Mollo. In this way, Papa Tius and Mama Maria became known to NGO activists, and Papa Tius especially was invited to participate in many NGO-sponsored activities. He was widely regarded as a key player in this resistance even though he did not, indeed claimed that for cultural reasons he could not, become the leader of an anti-mining movement.[81] More often than not the farmers followed paths unknown, even dismissed, by the activists.

---

[80] With a membership of nearly 1 million in 2000 congregations served by 600 ordained clergy, GMIT (*Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor* – the Evangelical Christian Church of Timor) is the second largest Protestant church in Indonesia. The reason to think GMIT might take an institutional stance regarding the mining is because of its relationship to UKAW University. UKAW was founded by GMIT and the other major Protestant church in NTT, GKS (*Gereja Kristen Sumba* – the Sumba Christian Church) and these two churches appoint members to the university's governing board.

[81] The traditional *meto* social-political system consisted of three key positions. *Usif* referred to the *raja* or local ruler whose warriors (*meo*) provided protection from other clans and who distributed food during times of severe drought in return for harvest tributes he received from the people under his rule. *Feotnai* referred to the female line of *usif* descendants (both male and female descendants of the *usif*'s sisters and daughters). Their task was primarily a domestic one – to care for the *usif*'s home and vast grounds and serve as host for all *usif* gatherings. The *amaf* sought to build alliances with the *usif* by providing him and his sons with wives. A body of usually eight *amaf* families elected the *usif* and made other major decisions for the clan. Although the *usif* was paramount in terms of social and economic

Over the years, as my family and I invited friends to join us on outings to Lelobatan, the Kune family became known to our friends, and then to our friends' friends. It wasn't long before Papa Tius and Mama Maria's home in Heum became an informal base from which different NGOs launched various campaigns, political education activities, and development projects in this area of Timor.[82] When it was known that preparations were underway to resume mining of Anjaf-Naususu, activists from several different NGOs began to converge on Papa Tius's and Mama Maria's home in Heum, drawn to a site of contestation like ants to honey. Because I was living with Papa Tius and Mama Maria, I was in a good position to closely observe the strategies of resistance attempted "in the field" by those involved in what they called people's advocacy. A journal entry expresses my anger at what felt like arrogance on the part of some of these activists:

> Well, the "organizers" have descended unannounced. Three from Kupang...three others from Kefamenanu... They bring materials, but no food. As with Teo who visited a few weeks ago, Melki, Ita, and Lidia have already begun to "harvest" oranges, sugar cane...picking fruit before they ask permission. Where do these kids come from? AGGHH! The Kupang NGO has already invited reporters to come up here on Monday and has planned an action at the *Bupati*'s office [in Soe] on Tuesday... Neither NGO thought to check with the people here first.

---

influence, political power was ultimately in the hands of the *amaf*. However, binary patterns of *meto* thought and expression (tame-wild, inside-outside, domestic-foreign, female-male, etc.) had some application in social-political life so that the "male" *amaf* and the "female" *feotnai* shared some power. In a gendered constructed system of checks and balances, *feotnai* were to be consulted by the *amaf* regarding all major clan decisions in order to assure both cosmic and social balance. As a *feotnai*, Papa Tius claimed he could only give support to opposition that needed to be led by the *amaf-amaf*. It was difficult for me to interpret if his argument – did it reflect Papa Tius's respect for traditional channels of decision-making or was he simply looking for an excuse to keep his profile as low as possible in what was becoming an increasingly tense conflict.

[82] E.g., when one NGO received money to prepare villagers to participate in Indonesia's first democratic elections on June 7, 1999, they chose Lelobatan as one of the sites to hold discussions with the hope that Papa Tius would call together people and facilitate such a discussion. Over the years, Papa Tius, who occasionally bemoans the ways NGOs "*menjual kemiskinan*," sell poverty, has grown wise to the ways that he and other villagers may be exploited by NGOs.

> Demonstrations and actions are organized around NGO schedules, as if the local people don't have any work of their own and are simply waiting for NGOs to arrange everything for them. Ho hum. So there's education happening – a younger generation of mostly city-bred activists get a certain kind of education regarding *adat* from the elders through their various organizing efforts, but what about the local youth? Where is NGO solidarity with them?
>
> July 17, 1999

When initial efforts to organize a large anti-mining demonstration failed, one NGO, without consulting anyone locally, decided to assign Robert to the region with the specific task of organizing farmers for collective protest. Also, without consulting anyone locally, it was assumed that Robert would stay with Papa Tius and Mama Maria. So, beginning in mid-August, the size of our household increased by one. Unfortunately Robert did not know the local language which made in-depth communication, an important aspect of "organizing," difficult. During Robert's months in Lelobatan he identified key elders in four villages around Anjaf-Naususu who should have been consulted before the mining began and were thought to have serious reservations about it. He then drew up a petition in Indonesian for these men to sign but, perhaps because the petition was not a local initiative, it was difficult to find people willing to circulate it. Getting a petition circulated and signed was no small task as it required delivery of the petition to men living over an extended area, explanation of the petition to farmers many of whom had only a partial understanding of Indonesian, did not know how to read, or both, and then getting signatures or thumbprints from them.[83] The petition-signing process took so long that the pro-mining group got wind of it and, I heard, began to

---

[83] Papa Tius tried to facilitate circulation of this petition even as he criticized the manner in which it was drawn up (he would have created a different petition for each village). He tried to get help from the church, asking the presbytery head to put out a letter about the petition or call together church members for a meeting, but to no avail. He further tried to borrow a motorcycle from a NGO (not Robert's) to help circulate the petition quickly, but this request was also ignored.

circulate a counter-petition of its own. Robert also sought to identify students from villages around Anjaf-Naususu who had in the past or still attended universities in Kupang. He hoped these students could be rallied to effectively contest the mining. It seemed like a good strategy, but for whatever reasons no student-based movement of this kind ever emerged. However, several years later, I learned that some of these students who had returned to the village did participate with their parents in other family-initiated forms of protest.

Another strategy undertaken by a different NGO at first seemed more promising. Staff members of this NGO brought Ahmad to Lelobatan in early July so he could see for himself where things stood. In his capacity as director of an anti-mining coalition based in Jakarta, Ahmad had impressive lobbying experience at the national level. After his visit he promised to rally opposition to the mining at the national level provided there was visible protest at the local level. With swift efficiency, the Kupang-based NGO that had brought Ahmad to Lelobatan issued a press release in which the mining was condemned on cultural and ecological grounds. True to his promise, Ahmad then set into motion a network to respond to the press release. From mid-July 1999 through the end of August, letters that protested the mining bombarded the Governor of NTT. The letters from groups such as *Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan* (Institute for Press and Development Studies), the Indonesian branch of World Wide Fund, and Geneva headquarters of Friends of the Earth reflect the breadth of this advocacy network. That this campaign could be deployed so quickly testifies both to the efficiency of networking among Indonesian environmental activists at the national level and at the same time to the

gap between their mobilization efforts and resistance efforts of the farmers in Mollo on whose behalf they protested.

In mid-August, the same NGO that brought Ahmad to Lelobatan sponsored a trip for two men from North Mollo to go to Jakarta to lobby human rights and environmental groups as well as a few key cabinet ministers. These men had never been to Jakarta and were understandably proud of the opportunity to meet with government ministers at the national level. It seemed the trip helped the opposition when leaders in Jakarta added their voices of concern by also sending letters to the NTT Governor. However, such pressure on the Governor would have been more beneficial to farmers in North Mollo who opposed the mining had more of them known about it. As it was, this other Kupang-based NGO had also taken the lead rather than first listen to what farmers themselves were thinking and feeling. Its members saw themselves as initiators rather than implementers of plans or ideas the farmers might have. Consequently the timing of their sophisticated lobbying campaign was off and, in the end, seemed only to intensify the conflict locally. Local proponents of the mining felt humiliated and angry when the case became high profile so quickly without concomitant action at the local level.[84] Province-wide media coverage of the Jakarta trip by the two local leaders also made it easier for the pro-mining contingent to claim that outsiders were sponsoring opposition to the mining and thus isolate and intimidate the two men who went to Jakarta.[85]

---

[84] It is also possible the pro-mining contingent was jealous that the anti-mining group was receiving so much attention and support from such a broad network; however, if true, it was probably felt politically incorrect to admit to such jealousy.

[85] Upon returning from Jakarta, one man essentially went into hiding and the other man was beaten. The fact that the NGO who sent these men to Jakarta did not take time for local leaders to choose their own representatives may also have fragmented opposition to the mining, with some of its supporters feeling that NGOs were indeed pulling the strings of resistance to the mining.

Farmers' Strategies of Resistance

Farmers' resistance to the mining included reconciling unfriendly relations among members of the community, both past and present, who now sought to be united in their opposition to the mining. I observed this at a meeting held at Papa Tius's and Mama Maria's in early August 1999. The bean, garlic, and carrot harvest was over and the heavy work of turning the rock-hard soil in preparation to plant corn, peanuts, and rice during the next rainy season had not yet begun. After repeated efforts to gather together more than three or four men opposed to the mining,[86] nearly 20 men from several hamlets in Lelobatan seemed to suddenly appear, perhaps because they had nothing else pressing to do. There was a lot of chatter as the men talked in small groups. Hermanus Oematan, a descendant of the original Mollo king, was present. As he was known to have the gift of recitation, it seemed that an oral history to establish the authentic line of kings was in order. Such a recitation would provide the formal legitimation for what everyone already knew – namely that Ben Oematan, one of the two local signers of the mining contract, had broken traditional law, and not simply by signing the contract. As an oral history would prove, Ben did not hold historical and cultural rights to represent the people of North Mollo in negotiating with investors, now or in the future.

Hermanus Oematan said he needed to "make history straight," but the process was as convoluted as some 20 men, all over 50 and of stubborn opinion, could possibly make it. There were plenty of arguments concerning which Oematan ancestor should

---

[86] People would gather for weddings and funerals, house worship and to build houses together, but to meet specifically to discuss their opposition to the mining was difficult, perhaps because farmers knew opposition to the mining meant opposition to the government's position. The Communist purges of 1965 (in which nearly half a million people were killed) were still remembered. Indonesians, even in the hills of Timor, and even after the fall of Suharto when democratic reforms seemed imminent, were not quite sure whether or not they should trust "freedom of assembly" as a right free of repression.

head the list of their common genealogy and heated discussion of other ancestors. During a trial run, Hermanus was frequently interrupted with the common question, "But what about so-and-so?"[87] However, before the story of the ancestors could proceed, grievances from the past had to be settled first, as I noted in my journal:

> Harmony between the Kunes and the Oematans of Lelobatan had to be established [it had been disrupted when the Oematans farmed Kune land without permission years ago]. Next the Oematans had to reclaim their inherited rights of power. Both these historical knots had to be undone before any history could be recited...As Papa Tius put it, when everyone first arrived things were really in an uproar, with members of each group speaking amongst themselves. Once the prayers were prayed, the ancestors summoned,[88] and past wrongs made right, everyone settled down and was ready to listen; the recitation could proceed smoothly.
>
> August 5, 1999

To understand this particular form of resistance requires a lesson in the genealogical history of the Oematan clan. The name Oematan is the name of the North Mollo king, but today the Oematans can be divided along ethnic lines – one Timorese, the other Chinese. As the story goes, the Oematans had always ruled in North Mollo, but when the Dutch began to "pacify" the interior of Timor early in the 20th century, local swords and machetes were no match for the Europeans' rifles and cannons. The *meto* in the central highlands were subdued, and negotiations with the Dutch became necessary. The people of Mollo could not communicate with the Dutch so they turned to a Chinese man, Lai Akun, who had learned to speak Dutch by virtue of his family's commercial

---

[87] It was a fascinating collaborative process to observe. Which thread of descendants was considered to be the major one? Who among those present had power to decide which questions were admissable? It all seemed a constant motion of push and pull.

[88] As with all occasions where the elders gather to engage in discussions of import, home-brewed, distilled palm gin called *sopi* is brought out. On this day, a glass of *sopi* was poured onto the ground to invite the ancestors to witness the proceedings. It was explained to me that the *sopi* was a stand-in for betel nut juice, the exchange of betel nut being the customary form of greeting.

experience with them. There are several versions of the story about how power was passed from the authentic Oematan king to Lai Akun, but the most dramatic elements are the same. The king at that time, To Luke Mtasa, is said to have adopted Lai Akun as his son and in a ritual ceremony symbolically handed over to the Chinese youth his eyes, his ears, and his tongue as well as the name Oematan. From that moment on, Lai Akun acquired the right to rule North Mollo, a powerful position that slowly began to weaken after the establishment of modern government institutions following Indonesian independence in 1945. In this Timorese version of the story, the Mollo king is the one who bestows power on Lai Akun. Other historical accounts suggest it was the Dutch rather than the *meto* people who selected Lai Akun as mediator in their dealings with the hill tribes of North Mollo which included, among other things, the collection of taxes. These accounts say the Dutch provided Lai Akun with a palace, gardens, authority, and even picked out a wife for him, the daughter of a king on the island of Rote. As Mollo oral history makes clear, Ben Oematan, one of the two local signatories of the mining contract, was not the descendant of the original Mollo king, but a grandson of Lai Akun, and an illegitimate one at that. His father, Sem Oematan, had children by two different women but was married to neither one. (Figure 3. Resistance & Genealogy).

That day in Lelobatan, when I watched the elders gather and listened to them pray, I witnessed an attempt to reverse the process whereby the *meto* Oematan clan had bestowed power on the adopted Chinese son. In an opening prayer, one of the Oematans present reversed the historic formula that had originally ceded power to Lai Akun, praying: "We take back our eyes, we take back our ears, we take back our tongue." The

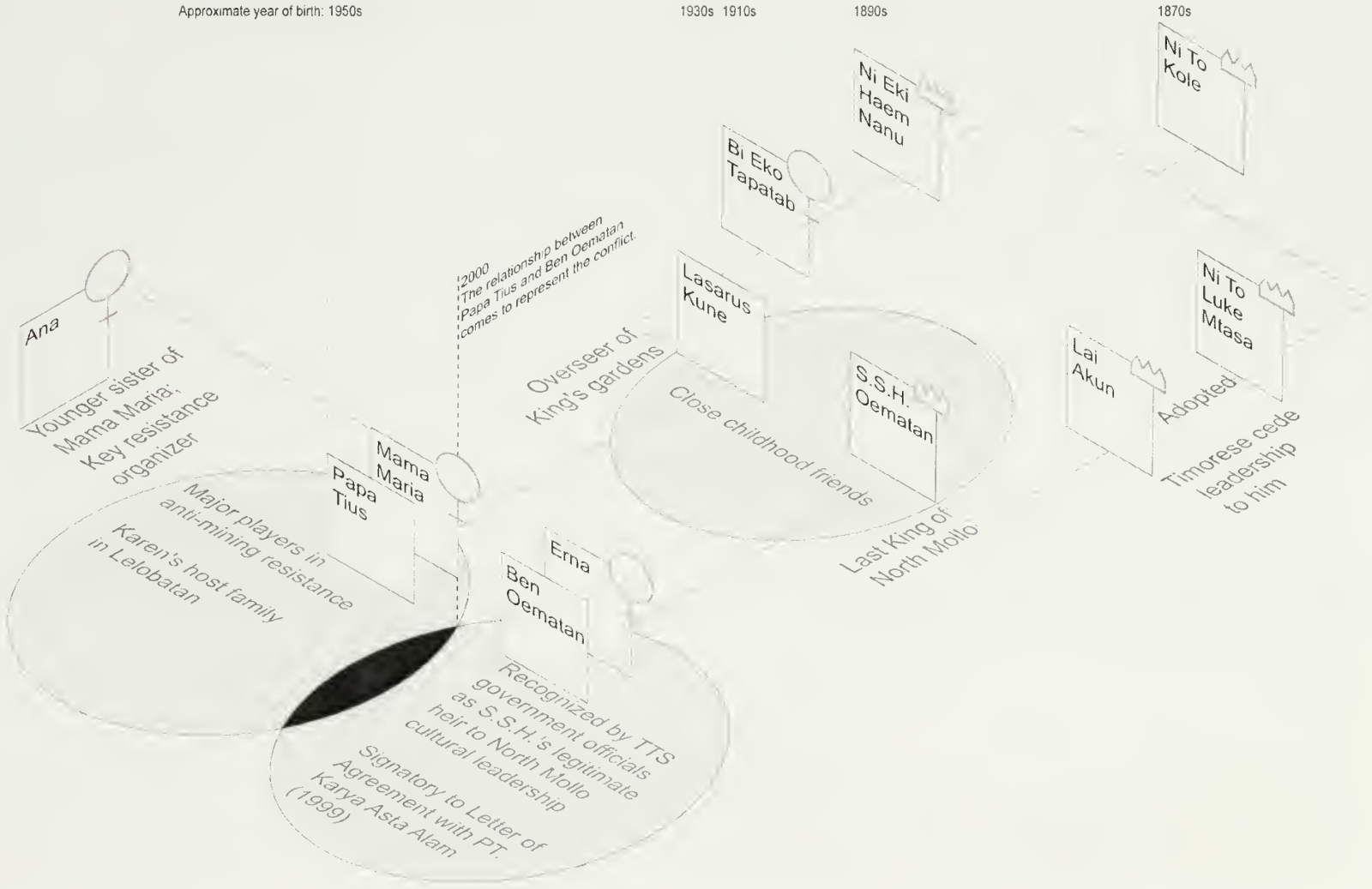

Figure 3: Resistance and Genealogy

prayer/performance continued by calling Ben a red chicken and red pig, an allusive curse of death.[89]

Yet another strategy of farmers' resistance served to revitalize a Timorese alliance all but buried in the past. According to an ancient story, there were once two brothers who founded two kingdoms (and language groups) on the island of Timor. The Tetun speaking brother, Liurai, ruled in the region of what is now Belu in West Timor (Figure 1, Chapter 1) and the western portion of East Timor. His brother, Sonbai, ruled the territory west of Belu all the way to the western tip of the island. Over time, as Sonbai's region became more densely populated, a number of smaller, localized kingdoms arose within it. Sonbai, however, was still considered Grandaddy of all *adat* communities in TTS, and the king to whom the people in North Mollo trace their roots.[90]

When it seemed that more, or at least other, resistance measures were needed, Papa Tius decided to take the advice of his niece, Ana, who had suggested nearly a year earlier that the people of Lelobatan enlist the help of Sonbai. (Ana is the young woman who successfully organized farmers to resist the mining in 2000.) At the exact moment two men from North Mollo met with cabinet ministers in Jakarta as part of an NGO-initiated strategy of resistance, a few men from the same region made a similar decision

---

[89] Listening and watching this man pray, I was reminded of how hard it is to know where prayer ends and performance begins in ritual prayer. His prayer for the recovery of authority included dramatic gestures in which eyes, ears, and tongue, once dis-membered from Lai Akun's line of descendents, were now re-membered within the authentic line of *meto* ancestors who included Nai Ni To, To Luke Mtasa, down to those Oematans gathered together that day.

[90] Sonbai is reputed to turn into a snake, a powerful Timorese symbol of divine power (cf. one of the Colombian blacks' leaders who was a sorcerer could turn into an animal when pursued and was immune to bullets, Taussig, 1980, p. 65). During tensions in West Timor following the East Timor referendum, I heard of special "medicine" that men took to protect themselves from bullets. "Medicine" used by local proponents of the mining was also the reason given for why efforts to bring together the farmers to resist the mining often met with failure.

by embarking on a journey all their own. It did not take them as far as Jakarta but, nevertheless, was just as important. Sonbai, who must be approached with reverence and caution,[91] in some contexts still holds as much prestige for the *meto* of West Timor as the President does for Indonesian nationalists.

Remnants of the Sonbai kingdom are today found in Bikau Niki, about two days west of Lelobatan by horseback and foot. The journey requires crossing rivers (treacherous during flash storms), passing through forests, and up and down several mountain passes. Bikau Niki can also be reached from North Mollo with a vehicle, provided such is available, by a very circuitous path, parts of which are not always passable during the rainy season. Out of respect for the seriousness of this venture, and the recognition that it was an internal Timorese matter, I chose not to join the small group, mostly men, who eventually made three trips to Sonbai (Ana joined them on the first trip.) I did, however, help arrange for my family's car in Noelbaki and a driver to meet them and drive them inland on their first trip.

On the first trip, Chief Neno Saen was gone, so the group met with his younger brother who instructed them to bring specific items on their next visit—a *selimut*, 50,000

---

[91] I learned more about the supernatural powers of Sonbai and his descendants from the men who visited him. His is the greatest authority among all Timorese and as *Latu Metan*, King of Darkness and Mystery, he is the great ritual king, rather than an active ruler, who orders the unseen powers. I was told that whereas the color of the church is white, for purity, the color of this netherworld is red, for courage. Although he agrees with Biblical teachings (meaning he won't seek to make innocent people sick or die), he is like a second god. He must go to a secret shrine where he meets with a spirit before he is able to do anything, and he has been seen to turn into a python. If he is approached, one may only ask for his support and to receive a visible sign of it, but he cannot be asked for something concrete (like a new house). The decision to approach Sonbai was a serious one and, as Taussig (1980) writes about devil beliefs, it was "the response of people to what they see as an evil and destructive way of ordering economic life" (p. 17). The *meto*-speaking Timorese have several words for their concept of spirit – *nitu, smnaf, setan*. It is important, therefore, to remember that when the people of Mollo speak about *setan*, they are talking about a spirit and not a Christian notion of satan. I wonder if the same is true of Tio, the spirit owner of tin mines in Bolivia (Taussig, 1980, Chapter 8). Is it possible that Taussig conflates an indigenous notion of spirit with a Western, Christian notion of the devil?

rupiah, an old silver coin, two bottles of palm whiskey, and a pig with brown and white bristles. He also told them they would have a sign, apparently to portend whether or not their struggle would ultimately meet with success. On their way home they had two signs. A recent issue of *Udik* (a NGO monthly publication) had featured Papa Tius talking about his opposition to the mining. On the return trip from Bikau Niki, Papa Tius met some civil servants in Kapan who had seen the bulletin and said they too wanted their pictures taken and the opportunity to explain to *Udik* why they disagreed with the mining. Papa Tius was excited to discover people other than farmers and activists who were also outspoken in their disgust with the mining. Another sign was revealed when the men learned that one of the huge Fuso trucks transporting marble had turned over, hurting the driver, and that a miner had been injured in a motorcycle accident. My journal entry a few days later gives a picture of how great tensions had become by the end of August. The men, whom I half-jokingly called *meo-meo* after traditional *meto* warriors, were ready to return to Sonbai a second time, but first wanted to pray with those of us left behind.

> While a few men are off looking for some old Grandpa they wanted to pray for them, Grandpa Sarus comes panting up from his house below and starts lecturing me...He's worried, very seriously, about our safety, particularly mine. I tell him I'm not going along, and Papa Tius assures him that all who are going are courageous and know how to travel carefully (they won't travel together as a group). Sarus is concerned because word has leaked out about their first visit [to Sonbai] and he's afraid they'll encounter spies (or worse) on this trip... It seems especially appropriate then that Grandpa Sarus be the one to pray over the group and pray he does like I've never quite heard before... He was eloquent...
>
> So Stefan and Enos are off [to lobby ministers] in Jakarta, Papa Tius and friends are on their way to Bikau Niki for a second time, and Markus is in Kupang for a NGO forum regarding the theft of sandalwood. When all these parties manage to converge in one spot in Lelobatan, I think they'll finally feel ready to try something and hopefully it will be something BIG.
>
> August 26, 1999

Grandpa Sarus had cause to be concerned. Although there was hardly any physical confrontation between the pro- and anti-mining farmers during the many months Anjaf and Naususu were being mined,[92] aggressive verbal posturing occurred on several occasions. After the trips to Sonbai began, Papa Tius and Mama Maria began to receive threats that Papa Tius was targeted to be beaten or worse, or that their house was targeted to be bombed[93] or burned. Papa Tius, Mama Maria, Robert, and I took to sleeping with machetes by our sides, and on many nights Papa Tius or neighboring family members posted watch on the hill above the house.

When the men returned from their second trip to Bikau Niki, this time by horse and foot, they were exhausted, and disappointed.[94] They had not succeeded in finding the right pig, so would have to make yet a third journey to Sonbai with a brown pig that would be butchered so its liver could be read. Papa Tius explained that they would read it like we read the Bible. Sonbai had said that on their next trip he would place a curse that would cause the harvest of all elders backing Ben Oematan (the list came to 37) to immediately wither. Papa Tius asked Sonbai's permission to bring along some NGO reporters on the next visit. Because Chief Neno Saen's great grandfather was once attacked and defeated by the Dutch, I saw no sense in pouting about being excluded.

---

[92] One exception was when Enos, one of the two who lobbied in Jakarta, was beaten after he returned home.

[93] In West Timor the word bomb usually means a low level explosive similar to a Molotov cocktail. In the wake of the East Timor crisis the term has been extended to include army-issued hand grenades.

[94] If any one of four items – *uas* (a turnip-like vegetable), bees, coffee, or pork meat – appears in a dream, it is a sign that something is about to fail or already has. The night before the group returned from its second trip to Bikau Niki, Mama Rut, Papa Tius's older sister, dreamed of bees buzzing around sandalwood so she had already guessed the trip had not been a success.

Although the *adat* ceremony could not be completed during the second visit, Sonbai allowed his visitors to enter the ceremonial dwelling, a round house many times larger than any they had ever seen in North Mollo. The men could not stop talking about the size of this house, how it appeared to be a round house from the outside, but was just like a rectangular modern house on the inside. These bigger-than-life descriptions may well have been intended to predispose us to accept the message they brought back from Sonbai. He had told them to hold off on a demonstration at Anjaf-Naususu since by going to him for help they had already begun to follow the path of "nature."

For several hours immediately after the men returned from their second trip we were captivated by stories about this other world of Bikau Niki where there are no signs of state administration or modern political structures, no taxes, and no industrial forest plantations. Plentiful deer and water buffalo (game that have all but disappeared in North Mollo) roam freely, and families are bound exceptionally close through the practice of old customs. As the stories began to fade, even Robert, the activist whose sole purpose for being in Lelobatan was to encourage an anti-mining demonstration – in part because it had been mandated by his NGO, in part because a successful demonstration would earn him legitimacy as a field organizer – seemed ready to concede to Sonbai's request to forestall a deomnostration. I could almost hear Robert thinking, "Maybe there is something to all this *adat* rigmarole after all."

Prior to the group's third and last visit to Sonbai they again gathered to pray, but this time they went to *Paé Non Tanin*, the Throat of the Earth, a nondescript boulder located about 15 minutes up the hillside from Papa Tius's and Mama Maria's house. Similar to hundreds of others like it, this rock, about 30 meters tall, jutted up from the

base of a larger peak. We climbed the rock, following an old, overgrown cow path about five minutes to reach a small plateau on the top with just barely enough space for the eight of us present to squat around an altar rock. As the sun set, Papa Sertus, the man asked to attend because of his ability to read signs,[95] delivered ritual words of introduction to the ancestors:

> O my ancestors, your chest of history[96] was not touched of old, but at this moment foreigners have come to destroy it. Thus, we come to this valley of our stables.[97] May you see for yourselves the newcomers who now destroy that rock, destroy your earth and the water that flows. They are like *sasi* birds[98] that rob, and like monkeys turning over rocks to look for little animals. We hope that you, all our ancestors, will grind them up and turn them over so they will go back to their own homes, to their own villages, so they won't destroy your earth and water. Whoever raises his head as their leader, may you murder him so he becomes like a red cow, a red pig.[99] Please take him at this moment. If these rocks are yours, release your chest of history [from their destruction]. May you take him so he will become meat and food, so there is no more destruction of your earth and water.[100] (At this moment the rooster, brought to kill as a sacrifice, crows.)

Having informed the ancestors why we had come to this place, we could now pray to God. This prayer was led by Markus, Papa Tius's older brother. Although

---

[95] Traditionally water buffalo entrails, but now usually chicken, sometimes pig or goat entrails are "read" to ascertain whether or not a prayer request had been accepted or rejected.

[96] Chest of history is a euphemism for Anjaf-Naususu.

[97] The rock on which we sat overlooks a valley that serves as an open-air, natural stable for cattle owned by farmers in Heum.

[98] The miners are like magpies that snatch things and take them back to their own nest.

[99] Red cow and red pig are euphemisms for butchered cow and pig.

[100] Although the rhetorical style – vocabulary, rhythm, grammar – of this curse matched the style of the prayer that followed, the two recitations were addressed to different audiences. Whereas this introductory preface appeals to the ancestors, the following prayer is addressed to God.

Markus is not an ordained preacher, he attended a Bible school for several years and leads the GMIT congregation in Fatumnasi, another village in North Mollo. Markus is frequently called upon by the Kunes to pray at all occasions in which ritual prayer is required. In his role as the family's divine mediator, Markus often crosses the border between traditional religion and Christianity. Indeed for him, as for many of the farmers in North Mollo, there may be no border there. Whereas Papa Sertus had issued the curse in *uab meto*, Markus prayed in Indonesian, whether for the sake of the two outsiders present (me and Robert) or because he thinks the Christian God prefers Indonesian to *uab meto*, I don't know. What follows is an abbreviated version of his prayer.[101]

> Let us pray. O God, You who possess the kingdom and glory, we come to this place of our ancestors, this place of forest, land, and rocks, secure for generations because there are guides [that tell us] what we may and may not touch...As we come before you now, God, we hear noises at Nanjaf and Nausus...This makes our hearts uneasy because this is a place that reveals Your glory, a place where You have placed springs of water, and a forest to green your creation. It is a place of great beauty where lustrous rocks shine all about, giving glory and praise to You. But in this place, at this very moment, Nanjaf and Naususu are being destroyed. O God, hear the noises there now. They are the sounds of earthly desire; the rock has been ruined because of the attitudes and deeds of people. Do they have a different god? You hear the sound of the wood, the sound of the rock, the land bears witness to a government that in this era tends to destroy.
>
> In the past [the government] issued prohibitions to protect this place. Now they have become sponsors of those who destroy your creation; they tread on previous policies and prohibitions they themselves made; they have trespassed the laws of God... Do not legitimate this destruction, O God, but respond with the harshness of Your Hand so they will come to understand life... We cry out to you from this place, O God, because since the beginning, whenever the earth was threatened, our ancestors came to this place to make all sanctions. We do not want to worship a different god, but cry out in this place for You to respond with the power of Your Hand, You Who possess the forest, water and dry land.

---

[101] See Appendix C, Prayer at Throat of the Earth (*Paé Non Tanin*,) for a transcription of the full prayer.

> Almighty God, we come before you with great moans because of what is happening now. We are convinced You will answer and forgive those among us who may have been influenced to destroy. We come before you in the name of Jesus who is the power for human life. You will continue to give breath to those who are faithful, and to those who are not, You will exact a portion so they live as insignificant creatures, as humans without meaning, because that is your Will and Power, because that is your Hand, Father. We come crying to you, Father, this evening, with Christ who is Head of the Church. We come and pray to you, Father in Heaven. Amen.

Papa Sertus had to use his knife to begin sawing away at the chicken's neck stretched out on a stone at his feet because no one had remembered to bring along a hatchet. Held by its legs to drain, the chicken bled slowly without spurts. We huddled against the lengthening shadows and blowing wind. Papa Tius pointed out to me how two long banks of the creek as seen from this particular spot seem to form a neck, thus the place name, Throat of the Earth. Papa Tius remembered coming to this place with his grandfather who prayed whenever a cow or water buffalo died, was stolen, or would not produce offspring.[102] It is still a place farmers come to pray for rain or for the dry season, whichever is needed to grant a reprieve from the other. It is also, and still, a place from which the ancestors' spirits can be summoned. With the chicken proffered as offering, the coaxing of the ancestors began. One or another of the men present would occasionally let out a yell like the kind they use when herding cattle or to locate each other in the forest. But this time the men were calling the ancestors to come and help read the sign of the sacrifice. There were actually two signs they were looking for to indicate whether or not their prayer requests had been accepted. If the flame of the fire they had lit burned straight and without wavering it meant their prayer, like the flame,

---

[102] It is also a site for prayers beseeching fertility for barren women. When I once asked Mama Debora, Papa Tius's older sister, why men would choose *Paé Non Tanin* as the spot to pray for Naususu, I was told it was because Naususu is a nursing mother.

would be upheld. If the chicken's esophagus had a sharp, rather than blunt point where it entered the stomach that too was a sign their prayer had been accepted.

While we waited for that *kairos* moment when the ancestors were present and the signs could be read,[103] another story of local resistance was shared. I was told that several years earlier, supplication made at *Paé Non Tanin* had precipitated the successful ousting of outsiders who had fenced off the grazing commons at the foot of Anjaf-Naususu when an Industrial Forest Plantation project (HTI) had been introduced. In an effort to resist this project, Papa Tius brought a woman pastor from the area and several NGO staff members opposed to HTI, to this same spot. Together they prayed that the workers might be chased away and that the project fail. The prayer was efficacious. Local farmers who had kept hidden from public purview their transcript of opposition were granted courage and strength. In the middle of the night following this prayer at *Paé Non Tanin*, the farmers who opposed the HTI project attacked the plantation workers, beating them up and setting fire to their sleeping quarters and mess hall. The workers fled and from that moment the government abandoned its HTI project in the Anjaf-Naususu area. Resistance was nothing new to the farmers of Lelobatan. I was just beginning to discover a history that was full of it.

I came to understand ritual prayer as the heart of the farmers' resistance. Like the Old Testament prophets, these farmers too beseeched God to hear their cries for justice, for an end to the destruction, and for moral fortitude among the members of their *adat* community. Sometimes the prayers I witnessed were part of another event. These

---

[103] Timing, by the way, is all important. One can't just cut up a chicken and expect immediate results...there is an art in knowing at just what moment the entrails will properly portend the future.

prayers were more spontaneous, less elaborate, and did not require that we gather at a particular location. But this prayer at *Paé Non Tanin* was a performance that had required some planning and a particular stage on the local landscape.

Following this prayer, Papa Tius was thoughtful as he reflected on the slowness with which people in the area protest something detrimental to them. He thought most farmers would not hesitate to protect their own fields, but protecting commons, like Anjaf-Nausus, was a different matter. Such land was traditionally the king's to protect and was the reason why Papa Tius and others had hoped the *amaf-amaf* would take the lead in protesting the mining. These reflections, coming as they did just after the prayer at *Paé Non Tanin*, suggest that farmers understand themselves to have a role in making prayers efficacious. The prayer suggests they were praying for a miracle, but the story of the resistance to HTI, linked as it is to prayer, suggests the people also pray for the strength to help make "miracles" happen. Talk then turned to the impending journey, the third trip, to Sonbai. Because there was still concern the men might be ambushed in their homes that night or the next, they planned to leave under cover of nightfall. However, two incidents threatened to postpone their departure.

One of Ben's older brothers, Arnol, who until then had effectively played both sides of the mining controversy – at least he had kept open channels of communication with the Kunes – showed up at the house not long after we returned from the prayer at *Paé Non Tanin*. He came to ask for Papa Tius's help in mending a rift among members of the Chinese Oematan clan.[104] He wanted Papa Tius to go with him to Kupang in a few

---

[104] Papa Tius's great-grandmother was sister to an earlier Timorese king, making her descendants *feotnai*, members of the king's female line of descendants (see n. 81 above). Papa Tius's mother and father had grown up together in the King's palace. His mother, *Nenek* Marta, had worked in the king's home (by then the Chinese Lai Akun) and his father, Grandpa Sarus, in his privileged role as *feotnai*, was overseer of

days to talk to an aunt who had flown in from Jakarta and whom Papa Tius knew well. I watched dumbfounded as Papa Tius welcomed Arnol with great warmth. Like welcoming home a prodigal son, Papa Tius brought out *sopi* to drink, and, in a gesture of great respect, presented Arnol with an old silver coin. Everything Papa Tius did and said indicated a sincere desire to heal the rift that had grown between the Kunes and this branch of the Chinese Oematans. His performance fooled me completely. I was not ready to accept that Papa Tius had finally decided to support the mining, but his behavior at that moment seemed to suggest as much. It was clear Papa Tius was eager to "kiss and make up" with the Oematans, not just with Arnol, but perhaps with Ben as well. I told myself, "Whatever. Maybe he thinks he can influence these guys. Or maybe he wants to try and keep the mining issue out of his personal relationship with Arnol and Ben." Then I realized what Papa Tius had figured out immediately. Arnol had asked Tius to go to Kupang on the very day the Vice Governor and other dignitaries were to gather at Anjaf-Naususu for the official ceremony to inaugurate the mining. Clearly someone was worried that anti-mining action was being planned to disrupt the ceremony. Arnol's invitation was designed to keep Papa Tius, and anyone else backing him, at a distance from the ceremony. Papa Tius never turned down Arnol's invitation, but neither did he accept it, something that did not go unnoticed despite all the warm hospitality extended. I knew Arnol and whoever had put him up to this visit had miscalculated, both in terms of

---

the king's lands. Grandpa Sarus had been raised together with Ben and Arnol's father, Sem Oematan, the last recognized king of North Mollo before his death in 1994. Sem's father, Lai Akun, decided that Sem, as his own son, should be sent to school to prepare him to take over Lai Akun's role someday whereas Sarus, almost like his adopted son, had no need for schooling, but would be given charge of the king's palace grounds. This history suggests how close relations once were between the Kunes and Oematans. Indeed Ben's wife was the daughter of Grandpa Sarus's sister. One reason it was difficult for the Chinese Oematans to have the Kune clan hold out against the mining was not just because it severed ties of intimacy, but because the Kunes still had a lot of local influence.

what they thought Papa Tius had planned for the ceremony and in terms of being able to persuade him to go to Kupang. Leading a demonstration the day of the ceremony was the furthest thing from Papa Tius's mind at the moment. He was fixed on his next visit to Sonbai, if he could manage to get there.

The approach to Sonbai intentionally involved only a few men who pretty much kept this particular resistance strategy to themselves. Another strategy, however, came from a man whose contact with NGOs inclined him to consider strategies of resistance aimed at the nation-state. The same night Arnol showed up to pull Papa Tius in one direction, Enos, just back after lobbying cabinet ministers in Jakarta and who had indeed been thinking about launching a protest action on the day of the ceremony, showed up to pull him in the other.[105] His presence was like a shot in the arm. After Arnol left and Enos shared stories of his meetings with cabinet ministers and the Commission for Human Rights in Jakarta, a plan was born. Enos wanted to create a roadblock to prevent people from attending the ceremony at Anjaf-Naususu that was to happen in just a few days. He thought a banner or sign stretched across the road at Nua Mollo, as the symbolic threshold to North Mollo, would be effective.[106] Markus agreed to distribute copies of documents from the Minister of Forestry and the Human Rights Commission that Enos brought back from Jakarta to church leaders who were meeting the day before the ceremony in the hopes they would agree to show up at Nua Mollo to protest. This

---

[105] Although Enos farmed, he also taught school in a village between Lelobatan and Kapan. No doubt his recent visit to Jakarta helped him to see the value of donning an identity as a local elder. His border identity (he had the orientation of a civil servant, but an understanding and appreciation of traditional customs) made him a likely candidate for local organizing among farmers.

[106] Nua Mollo, a small rock garden of marble located across the road from where Enos lives, is considered a cultural landmark by his family. It too was being mined.

was to be the local action while Papa Tius and others brought a successful conclusion to their mission to Sonbai.[107]

We talked late into the night, but I finally gave up and went to bed. The many guests present that night – Enos, members of the group leaving for Bikau Niki, Markus, Robert – also found beds, crowded together under one roof. It happened to be the roof under which I too slept. I fell asleep that night to the sound of Enos's voice in the next room, talking in bed to Markus and Papa Tius. He was trying to come up with just the right words for the protest sign to post at Nua Mollo. If enough protesters gathered, anyone headed for the ceremony would never make it past the sign, but would be stopped and compelled to turn around.

Early the next morning, Enos proudly presented me with the words he had struggled so hard to formulate the night before:

Enok Mollo ma' Eka,	The Door to Mollo is Closed,
Monik nok Atolan,	Live with Respect,
Naek Monleun Pah nok in Nesan	Don't Break the Earth and Everything in It

I was as enthusiastic as he about his poetry, imagining the powerful words displayed in public, the unveiling of a previously hidden transcript.

The commotion of the night before was lifted by morning calm. I did not savor the moment enough. It was to be some time before I would know another morning like that one. Enos hurried home to get photocopies ready to send to Markus; Markus prepared for his meeting with church leaders where he planned to rally support for a public protest. The travelers to Bikau Niki had left hours before daybreak, taking their

---

[107] Papa Tius did not seek to stop this protest in the way he had sought to stop the demonstration Robert wanted. I do not know if this was because the Nua Mollo protest was being organized by Enos (a local resident), rather than an outside activist, or whether it was because Papa Tius interpreted Sonbai's warning not to carry out a demonstration to apply only to demonstrations at the Anjaf-Naususu site.

horses and, this time, a brown pig with them. It was the first of September 1999 and after a few days' reprieve from the cacophony of machinery, the power saws at Anjaf-Naususu were as loud as ever. Markus, Mama Maria, and I were still lingering around the kitchen when *Ibu* Betsi showed up. Although I couldn't follow much of the conversation, I sat and listened and later had help filling in the blanks.

Ibu Betsi and her husband, *Pak* Lot, live in Fatukoto. For months *Pak* Lot had voluntarily spied on mining activities, providing insider reports on a regular basis to Papa Tius and Mama Maria.[108] Although I had seen *Pak* Lot at the house once or twice, I had never paid enough attention to realize his visits were more than just a polite exchange of betel nut. Although *Pak* Lot felt compelled to join the other elders in Fatukoto in support of the mining, he did not, in truth, support it. To ease his conscience he shared news as he was able with Papa Tius. However, *Pak* Lot became convinced that he was being watched and that it was no longer safe for him to visit Papa Tius and Mama Maria. That is why on this day his wife came to the house.

Ibu Betsi was full of news. She reported on a recent visit by Fatukoto elders, including her husband, to the Governor in Kupang. The Governor scolded them for not having more local support for the mining, and complained about pressure he was receiving from cabinet ministers (the result of direct lobbying by Enos and Stefan). Where the Governor really stood, however, was revealed by the message he asked these pro-mining elders to deliver to the investor. It went something like: "When the mining is

---

[108] Although *Pak* Lot on his own chose to "report" to Papa Tius, Papa Tius on his own initiative made sure a distant cousin of his signed up to work at Anjaf-Naususu. This cousin monitored developments at the mining site and shared the information with Papa Tius. Papa Tius kept this arrangement with his cousin very quiet and only told me about it much later when exposure of the spying, had there been any, would not have jeopordized resistance efforts.

finished, flatten whatever is left so we can put a statue on top of the site." *Ibu* Betsi also told us that several Javanese miners had died, but that their deaths had been kept quiet. Their bodies were placed in bags and then taken away by truck to be dumped in graves dug in *Naes Met* (Black Forest).[109] If a worker died, the investor would send his wife in Java a little money, but not the body to be buried.[110] Other stories suggested that even the beasts of the forest sought to resist the mining. Once when the bulldozer was digging, a python wrapped itself around the neck of its hoe, but was then flung onto someone's garden hut. Another time, as the bulldozer was scraping at a chunk of rock, a big monkey appeared on top of the rock and solemnly held up a hand in stop sign fashion before disappearing into the forest.

Ibu Betsi came to the house with two bead necklaces, the old rust-colored coral ones I love so well, that she wanted to sell. *Pak* Lot now worked with the many other Fatukoto residents who gathered loose rocks for the mining company because, as his wife explained, someone had, unbeknownst to them, added his name to the work list. *Ibu* Betsi said she wanted to collect all the money her husband earned from this work to bring to Papa Tius's house so it could be prayed over before they used it. Because *Ibu* Betsi and *Pak* Lot did not feel safe using what cash *Pak* Lot earned at the mine, they were

---

[109] Further research is needed to determine whether or not there are historically recognized sites for dumping corpses in West Timor. Rumor had it that *Naes Met*, a thick forest between Soe and Kapan, was a location where corpses from communist purgings in mid-60s had been dumped and more recently where murder victims following the East Timor referendum had been hidden. There is a very deep gorge between Soe in TTS and Kefamnanu in TTU where it is said Sonbai, the former Great King of West Timor, attacked the Dutch. This gorge is also rumored to be a site for dumping corpses.

[110] I had no way to verify the stories I heard about mining-related injuries (one young man lost an eye when a rock chip flew into it) and deaths (as many as six), indeed it would have been difficult to verify them without reliable eye witnesses willing to testify in court. That I heard similar stories over a period of several months from different sources suggests, however, there was some basis for them.

selling necklaces to get the cash they needed. Their dilemma exemplifies how complex, and at times compromised, resistance could be for local farmers. To the outside investor and pro-mining supporters they exhibited no protest, indeed *Pak* Lot worked on the project. But with members of their community whom they respected and cared about, they were open about their forms of resistance – spying and stigmatizing the miner's money. That was one interpretation, but there was another possibility. Yes, *Ibu* Betsi had given us an updated glimpse into activities being waged by the pro-mining contingent, but maybe, like Arnol, she too had been sent to "spy," to try and find out if some kind of demonstration was being planned for the up-coming ceremony.

The men returned from their third visit to Sonbai late on the night of September third. However, their apparent success in obtaining the support of the powerful Sonbai clan did not portend success for other aspects of resistance. Enos's words never got public exposure, and Markus never distributed the documents intended to rally anti-mining support. The planned protest at the symbolic gate to Naususu never happened, and the ceremony to inaugurate the mining on September fourth came and went without incident. A day before the September fourth ceremony, Enos was attacked, struck with a rock in his chest, back and waist, by one of the men who had signed the statement of agreement to have Nua Mollo mined (Messakh, 1999).[111] My journal indicates I felt circles of terror closing in:

> What with news of Enos's beating and rumors about plans to bomb Tius's house – well, last night I was just plain scared and tried to think of the best way to protect

[111] Enos and his wife fled to Kupang where he reported to one of the NGOs with whom he had strategized in the past. A picture of his wounds was taken and sent to the Indonesian Commission on Human Rights in Jakarta.

my data...In the middle of the night, a truck drove down to Hoeneno[112] and took its time coming out. Had thugs been trucked in? Just before I heard the truck coming out, I heard a plane flying overhead on its way to Dili. This morning another one or two planes headed to Dili and another one again tonight.

September 3, 1999

The Path Interrupted

On September eighth, my research assistant, Serly, and I headed for a traditional harvest ceremony in Tamkesi, a small village in North Central Timor (TTU) several hours east of Lelobatan. We wanted to attend this ceremony to observe how a clan in another area of West Timor was keeping alive its cultural traditions.[113] By noon we had reached Soe where we would take the highway east in the direction of Tamkesi (and East Timor). Four days earlier many resisters to the mining silently bore the violation of Naususu as it was publicly celebrated in a ceremony held without protest. Upon arriving in Soe, which was my first direct contact with the exodus of refugees from East Timor, I suddenly had a powerful sense of the violation of human rights that had also just days earlier took the form of systematic and widespread burning, looting, and killing in East Timor.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees were flooding into West Timor, crowding the highway that connects Dili to Kupang and the people of West Timor were alarmed by the numbers and scared by those armed. When Serly and I made a pit stop at the office of a women's advocacy NGO in Soe, there was a message waiting for me. A good friend who

---

[112] Lelobatan Village is comprised of a number of hamlets. Hoeneno is the most populated hamlet and the administrative center of Lelobatan. Lelobatan's main church, one grade school, one clinic, and village office are all located in Hoeneno.

[113] A few others who had planned to join us backed out when they learned that the regulation to travel with one's ID card was suddenly being enforced (their cards were out of date). This regulation was precipitated by the East Timor refugee crisis.

had been working in East Timor with human rights and women activists had managed to evacuate safely and by September eighth was already busy in Kupang organizing sanctuary and aid for pro-independence East Timorese being hunted by militia. Earlier that day she had phoned Soe to urge me to get to my family in Noelbaki as quickly as possible. I was warned to be very careful for it seemed East Timorese militia had declared open hunting season on white people.[114] Shocked, confused, and frightened I wasn't sure what to do. For the first time I realized how seriously endangered I might be because of the color of my skin. Would I be safe on the highway for the three-hour trip from Soe down to Noelbaki? My immediate reaction was to turn around and return to Heum. That hamlet was well off the beaten path between Dili and Kupang and I knew people there would protect and hide me if need be. But I did not know if my husband, who had been one of thousands of international visitors monitoring the referendum process, had been able to get out of East Timor safely, nor could I find out if my children in Noelbaki were safe (our Noelbaki neighborhood has no phone lines).

It was time to leave the mountains, for how long I had no idea. I fretted about my data, but Serly promised to return to the village and retrieve my journal and audio casettes and get them to me somehow. With assistance from Ana, a staff member of the NGO where we had stopped, I managed to get to Noelbaki huddled in the back of a rented *bemo*.[115] As we drove down the winding highway towards the sea, it felt like I

---

[114] See Chapter 1, p. 7, n. 9.

[115] So that I would not need to go out in public, Ana rented a *bemo* (van), and recruited her husband (who brought along a machete) and several high school students from her household to fill it, thus providing me with some human camouflage. Ana showed up at the office with the *bemo*, pillows and a blanket for me to hide under should we be stopped. I was accompanied all the way to my Noelbaki home where I discovered my husband and children were safe, but the world being turned upside down.

was descending into hell. The highway was full of heavily armored vehicles and trucks laden with all goods imaginable. Cars and *bemos* crowded with militia brandishing their weapons, their heads tied with red and white bandanas,[116] their voices shouting support for Indonesia and hatred of pro-independence East Timorese, caused my gut to clench and I shrank even further under the blanket Ana had loaned me. I left Lelobatan, its fields and forests and people, without saying good-bye. All I took with me were a few clothes, a small amount of money, calloused feet, new scars, and words I wanted to teach my children: *Naek Monleun Pah nok in Nesan*, Don't Break the Earth and Everything in It.

It was to be two months before I returned to Lelobatan.[117] Once the militia curtailed their bounty hunts and the highway seemed safe enough to travel, I returned to the mountains once again to tie off some of the threads I had left dangling. A journal entry indicates I returned with unhealed trauma from places still dominated by militia violence and intimidation.

---

[116] The bandanas, made to resemble Indonesia's red-white flag, were intended as symbols of loyalty to Indonesia. I read them only as signs of terror.

[117] During these two months I experienced fear and trauma as I had not before. For weeks both the rice fields in front of our house and the road running behind it were frequented by bounty-hunter militia on the prowl for pro-independence supporters. One day my husband and I were warned by the university rector that our names were said to be on a militia hit list and that a night raid was being planned. After consultation with refugees who had sought safety in our home, we all spent the night in a field up the hill behind our house. I constantly worried that our provision of shelter and food to pro-independence East Timorese put us at added risk, and I found myself unable to sleep soundly, keeping an ear half-cocked at night for sounds of unrest. As soon as we managed to get our house guests on repatriation flights back to East Timor, my husband, children, and I evacuated to Bali for the first time in October 1999. Because East Timorese militia could be so unpredictable and violent, we thought it best to put ourselves at a distance from them to await Indonesia's official decision on East Timor to be made during parliamentary sessions that month. Once the parliament accepted the results of the referendum, we returned to West Timor. It was also this session of parliament that elected Abdurrahman Wahid as Indonesia's fourth president and Megawati Sukarnoputeri as vice president. To compound my anxiety during these months were my two teenaged children, one of whom sought to deny the crisis by refusing to take precautions.

My soul has shriveled. I know this because everything frightens me. I seem to be perpetually anxious. Each dip of the plane on our trip back from Bali left me with sweaty palms; each crumbling shoulder on the road from Noelbaki to Lelobatan summoned visions of us in the car plunging to our deaths.

November 6, 1999

Villagers in Lelobatan, I discovered, had some awareness of the refugees. For example, I was told that some East Timorese had begun to work at the Anjaf-Naususu mining site, and stories heard at the weekly market in Kapan about refugee violence quickly circulated. For the most part, however, refugees did not wander into the mountains of North Mollo, mercifully sparing villagers there from the havoc they wrought in other regions of West Timor. Post-traumatic stress made it difficult for me to re-engage with my research, yet physical distance from the camps and from constant media coverage of refugee-related incidents was helpful. It was not long before I managed to form a team of young farmers to help carry out a survey on biological diversity and opinions related to local knowledge. Along with help from a number of others, my research assistants and I also held a cultural festival for grade school children as an experiment in the transmission of local knowledge (see Chapter 6).

Having a better sense of closure to my research, I left Lelobatan a second time shortly after Christmas 1999. At that time it seemed that anti-mining sentiment had gone into remission and the mining of Anjaf-Naususu would continue indefinitely. Efforts to rally broad-based, open resistance to the mining had met with repeated failure. Since Enos's beating, local opponents to the mining were as fragmented as ever and shied away from outspoken criticism even more than they had before. Institutional opposition remained limited to a few NGOs whose advocacy was, at best, sporadic. Although my second departure from Lelobatan in December 1999 was far more calm and orderly than

it had been in September, this did not help me remain focused on my research once I left the village. The presence of more than 250,000 East Timorese who overflowed the refugee camps in which they were concentrated – their needs, demands, and the violence incited by the militia them – continued to dominate public discourse throughout much of West Timor.[118] Within weeks of moving myself and all my data to Noelbaki I was engaged full-time in several documentation projects related to the refugee crisis. For a second time my time and energy shifted from dealing with issues of mining and local knowledge in Lelobatan to negotiations of refugee violence and the militarization of West Timor. My data from Lelobatan – maps, surveys, photos, notes, cassettes full of interviews – began to collect dust. Although I returned to Lelobatan for brief visits several times during the next year and a half, it took that long before I brushed away the dust to revisit my data. By the time I did, the landscape of resistance in Lelobatan had changed significantly.

[118] Major actors in this discursive domination were the media, particularly local newspapers, at least one of which was started in mid-1999 by Abilio Soares, former Governor of East Timor. Once in Noelbaki I was bombarded by refugee-oriented news and issues that never reached Lelobatan.

Postscript[119]

In reconstructing the story of resistance that I failed to monitor for a year and a half following my departure from Lelobatan, I recalled that during my last two months there no one ever mentioned Enos. Nor did anyone speak of his glorious plans for a demonstration on the day of the inauguration of the mining in early September 1999. It was as if people had feared to speak of him or of his beating lest that somehow invite further disaster. What I learned much later was that Enos had, in fact, returned to his home within just days of his beating. Like a spring bubbling up through rock, he had not been defeated by the beating, but rather his courage and determination were renewed by it. He and his wife, Ester, continued to actively protest the mining of Anjaf-Naususu as well as at Nua Mollo. In fact, Ester was to play a key role along with several others the next year in consolidating protest of the mining.

Early the next year, Papa Tius's niece, Ana, began to succeed where other activists had failed. Not only did she have knowledge of the local language and family politics that outside activists did not, she also possessed great courage and resourcefulness as she so clearly demonstrated when she managed to shepherd me safely from Soe to Noelbaki during a very unsafe time. Ana understood the importance of grounding resistance to the mining in articulations of cultural identity,[120] but more importantly she was prepared to act on her understanding. By February 2000, Ana began a process of local cultural revitalization by approaching the *amaf*, *feotnai*, *naimnuke*, and

---

[119] Most of the information for this section comes from *Laporan: Narasi* (2001) supplemented by notes from a journalist who had been monitoring the case and interviews with Ana and others who participated in this phase of the resistance.

[120] Ana was the one who initially encouraged Papa Tius to seek an anti-mining alliance with Sonbai. She and her husband joined the group of men from Lelobatan on their first visit to Sonbai.

meo – those whose family names evoked their ancestors' role in the traditional social structure of North Mollo.[121] Simultaneously she formed a cadre of *lulbas*,[122] one of whom was Enos's wife, Ester, to serve as conduits for communication among participants in a growing network of resistance.[123] From March through April 2000, Ana held a series of secret meetings with the *amaf* to establish a mutual agenda: the expulsion of the mining company that was ruining the environment and restoration of a traditional social structure. The *lulbas*, who collected information about the impact of the mining in villages around Nausus, met frequently to share their findings with each other.

The normal rainy season in the hills of Mollo lasts anywhere from October or November until late March or April. But when the rains continued to fall well into May that year, farmers gathered for a traditional ceremony at *Fatu Tunan*, the rock from which centuries earlier North Mollo warriors were said to have turned back the Dutch. Villagers sought to discern through pray whether the long rainy season ruining their crops and causing unprecedented loss of livestock was due to climatic change as the government claimed or was, in fact, a curse suffered by all in North Mollo for permitting the disturbance of Anjaf-Naususu. This ceremony proved to be a turning point in the

---

[121] See Appendix D, Changes in Leadership Structure in TTS for a brief description of these roles.

[122] Traditionally, *lulbas* were couriers who carried news from the king in his palace to the people in their hamlets. Ana revived the term, giving it a new meaning, as part of her organizing strategy.

[123] To say Ana approached key local leaders and formed a cadre of communication couriers does not do justice to the physically demanding nature of this work. For months she hiked up and down steep, rocky paths, even when she was many months pregnant with her second child, in order to visit *adat* leaders in their own homes. Because of growing intimidation by government officials and pro-mining supporters, most visits and meetings during this early period of organizing occurred late at night. The effort to reach so many people in so many difficult to reach hamlets testified both to her commitment to resistance and to her respect for villagers unaccustomed to being sought out and consulted. The effort to meet people in their own space, in their own language, in other words on their terms, played a significant role in the mobilization of an anti-mining coalition.

struggle to resist. As soon as prayers had been offered, the sun emerged, strengthening the resolve of those present to protect all rocks in North Mollo and insuring a place for this event in the oral history being constructed as a part of the resistance movement.

In June, after months of innumerable home visits, Ana and the *lulbas* initiated community wide meetings in 12 villages. Farmers and key leaders who had complained about the mining to Ana in private now welcomed the opportunity to express their anger in what was seen as safe public space, village offices and churches where Ana, not a government official, called the meeting and where the majority present opposed the mining. These public gatherings were another key element in consolidating a plan of action. By the end of the month, the organizers felt enough energy had been mobilized to take action. Quietly and systematically the *lulbas* collected donations of corn, cassava, bananas, rice, vegetables, and small amounts of cash from farmers in the 12 villages.[124] Banners and posters were made and trucks rented that would pick up protesters in their villages and deliver them to the mining site. On June 3, 2000 about 600 people gathered at the mining site. Orations were given and banners of protest posted. That evening government officials from the sub-regency office in Kapan and the regency office in Soe showed up to try to persuade the protesters to disperse. When this failed, they became angry, calling the protesters anarchists, communists, and disrupters of democracy who were illegally occupying government land. The following day 10 *amaf* from among the protesters met with the *Bupati* in his Soe office. However, when it became apparent that the *Bupati* and other government officials were intent on permitting the investor to

[124] Ana also received financial support for this work from a Kupang-based NGO that, in turn, receives funds from an Australian NGO. She also received funds from the Education for Democracy program at the Protestant University UKAW, a program that, in turn, receives funding from a Protestant church in the US.

continue the mining, the *amaf* returned in anger to the sit-in, adding fuel to the fires of protest. The protesters remained at the site for several days, dispersing only after they were threatened by armed security. However, a few days later they reconvened in greater force with about 2000 protesters descending on the site. This time mining buildings were damaged so that the miners evacuated to Soe. About 14 protesters, local farmers and activists, were arrested and taken to the sub-regency office in Kapan. After waiting futilely for hours to be pressed with charges or for some other action to be taken against them, they too returned to the sit-in as had the *amaf* a few days earlier.[125]

After trying for more than a year to organize farmers in North Mollo to demonstrate on a massive scale, Kupang-based NGOs were more than ready and willing to provide helpful and appropriate support when the time finally came. Within a few days of the sit-in at Anjaf-Naususu, Kupang-based NGOs facilitated the convergence of thousands of villagers from different regions of West Timor at the governor's office in Kupang to make a range of demands, including the demand to stop the mining of Anjaf-Naususu. The governor promised to withdraw the mining company's permit by mid-August. Demonstrators, both in Kupang and at the Anjaf-Naususu sit-in, returned to their homes, waiting to see if the governor would be true to his word. A few days before the mid-August deadline, several of the *amaf* identified as key supporters of the protest were picked up at their homes by regency officials and escorted to Soe to again meet with the

---

[125] Interactions of protesters, particularly those who were "arrested," with government officials that resulted in apparent inaction on the government side suggests not only that government officials had deep and vested interests in continuation of the mining, but also that they had little experience with mass demonstrations. Indeed, mass demonstrations in West Timor are, for the most part, much more common in Kupang where students play a major role. One of the largest demonstrations ever by farmers in North Mollo occurred in August 1998 when the first company to mine Anjaf-Nausus was forced to suspend operations. The sit-ins of July and August 2000 involved greater numbers of farmers and lasted longer.

Bupati. They were offered a lump sum of 10 million *rupiah* (about US $1000) in return for permitting the mining to proceed.[126] They rejected the offer. A few days later when no withdrawal of the miners was apparent, farmers gathered for a third time at the site, this time armed with sticks and rocks and ready to burn down the buildings. The women, who were particularly vocal at this demonstration, yelled for the mining to stop, "Don't take away our milk! Don't bring disaster to us! Free us from this threat!" Government officials made one last, unsuccessful attempt to stop the protesters, but failed (see Chapter 4, Act III, Scene II for the narrative of this encounter).

On August 18, 2000, after a long, drawn-out push and pull that saw increasing numbers of men and women farmers ready to directly confront not only government officials, but also armed security forces at the mining site, the Governor finally signed a letter that halted the mining of Anjaf-Naususu for six months, from September 1, 2000 –

---

[126] This was not the first time the *amaf* were approached with money. Earlier in the same month (Aug.2000), the two government-appointed mediators assigned to bring together the two conflicting local parties – Son and his supporters and the protesting *amaf-amaf* – in order to reach some consensus, instead approached the *amaf-amaf* in their homes offering them anywhere from *Rp.* 80.000,- to *Rp.* 200.000,- (US $8 - $20). In all but one instance, the *amaf-amaf* took the money and then turned around and displayed it in future gatherings, whether with the government or the *lulbas*, saying it was proof that the government was trying to get the *amaf* to bite by dangling money before them.

To my knowledge there has never been an inventory made of the total sums of money involved in supporting both sides of this protest. Several different NGOs, individuals, and a university program provided financial support to Ana. On the other side, a fair amount of money was spent on what some might call perks or bribes to farmers as recompense for their support of the mining. Although there are no numbers available, it is common knowledge that supporters received generators and zinc to roof their houses. Some were given money, supposedly as scholarships for their children, and at least one church pastor was rumored to have received funds and wood for church building improvements. Others, such as these key *amaf-amaf*, received offers of cash. Even Ana tells of accepting funds and then regretting it when her oldest child fell ill. Besides no clear picture of how much money went to insure support of the mining (or as gratuity, depending on how the transaction is framed discursively), the source of these gifts, whether the investor, the government, or perhaps even Ben, is also unclear.

Increasingly, those who participate in mass protests and demonstrations in Jakarta are cash-poor individuals hired as protesters by organizations with money and an ideological agenda they want to promote on the streets. This has become so common that it is indeed difficult to interpret the degree of genuine popular sentiment on any given, contested issue. Considering that government officials and other pro-mining supporters accused protesters of being hired by NGOs to protest suggests that the role of funding in the politics of resistance deserves greater attention.

March 1, 2001. This was followed by a press conference on August 21st in which the Governor announced he would permanently close down the marble mining if the people could come up with an alternative to support regional sources of income. Several months later, Benny Ndoenboey, head of the NTT Mining Department, said that a halt to marble mining would cause an annual loss of 400 million *rupiah* (US$40,000) from local sources of income, not to mention loss of employment opportunities. In late July 2001, five months after the temporary revocation of the mining permit had expired, it was reported in local papers that TTS *Bupati* Nope had plans to resume marble mining in North Mollo by bringing in an investor from Jakarta. He said that PT. Karya Asta Alam was prepared to return as long as security of its personnel was guaranteed. A few weeks later, Ndoenboey said the only new mining company interested in investing in NTT was a Singaporean company interested in mining kaolin and gypsum. Such statements point to a lack of communication and coordination between provincial and regency mining agendas.

As of October 2002, no investor has resumed mining at Anjaf-Naususu. Anti-mining farmers have erected several talismans at the mining location, as if hanging amulets around Nau's neck. At one point they also built a *lopo* where resisters, having reclaimed this space as communal property, could freely gather. However, the anti-mining faction is now divided – in part due to two different organizers who no longer work together – and the *lopo* was recently burned down.[127] The blocks of marble that still dot the land around the peaks cannot be glued back into place, nor can the forests of

[127] One NGO activist I spoke to speculated that someone had been hired by the pro-mining faction to burn the *lopo*.

trees be replanted. The earth cannot be patched back into the pockets from which it slid, and there is no way to make the springs flow again. Birds, monkeys, snakes, bees, mongoose, bats, and other animals cannot be returned to these mountains because there is no longer protection for them there. Today, the landscape of Anjaf-Naususu is inscribed with signs of violence, the slate on which lessons of resistance are written in shorthand for those who wish to learn.

CHAPTER 3

URBAN DESIGNS ON INDIGENOUS SPACE: THE POLITICS OF MINING

When rush hour has passed and shoppers, beggars, and demonstrators have gone home, taxis are able to accelerate a bit down Central Jakarta's wide boulevard, *Jalan* Thamrin. On my occasional visits to Jakarta I have found that after a few days being whisked past skyscrapers and foreign embassies, traversing flyovers above rusting zinc roofs of cramped hovels and garbage-choked rivers, cruising through neighborhoods of spacious mansions and shaded parks, waiting, stalled among dirty buses and elegant sedans, my disorientation at being in the "big city" begins to fade. When observed from the back of an air-conditioned taxi, some visions of this urban landscape are not so intimidating, seem even pleasant – marble-fronted office buildings, impressive statues, glittery shopping malls. To see the presidential palace, Indonesia's Supreme Court building, Jakarta's financial district and, since my last trip in 2000, the National Commission for Human Rights – even just in passing, from inside a taxi – is to sense the proximity of power.

Home to nearly 200,000 residents, Kupang boasts a cement factory (construction on a second one, several years in the planning, has yet to begin), small carpentry and fishing enterprises, and a large number of Chinese-owned construction and retail businesses. Once a sleepy colonial harbor known for its export of sandalwood and wax, the major (legal) export today consists of live cattle shipped to Java where they are butchered and consumed.[128] Today, like many towns throughout Indonesia, Kupang and

[128] Illegal exports from NTT include village-made weapons, particularly from the island of Rote to regions of conflict in Indonesia such as Ambon and the Molucca islands. Kerosene and petroleum are now being "smuggled" into Timor Lorosae because the US dollar-based economy there makes it a profitable

its smaller twin in South Central Timor, Soe, have expanded as government administrative and educational centers. By most standards it would be hard to consider Kupang and Soe to be urban centers, but they are more urban than rural, and in the context of West Timor they pass as cities.

Cities, their very existence the epitome of industrialization, stand as one of the strongest arguments for the necessity of mining. I am unable to imagine cities without asphalt, granite, sandstone, iron, oil, and gas. They are not the only sites to learn about the politics of mining, but they are a good place to begin, among other reasons because they are where the mechanisms that concentrate power are formed, fueled, and lubricated. They are the sites of power brokers and investors; hubs from which information about mining policies and regulations, mining revenues, mining interests, even particular strategies of resistance to mining can be found. In collecting information about the politics of mining as it impinges on the Anjaf-Naususu case, I moved to and fro through real and cyber space, visiting individuals and institutions in Jakarta, Kupang, and Soe – "hubs" at the national, provincial, and regency levels. From national center to provincial and regency hub, cities are fitting representations of the politics of mining in Indonesia, representations that point to the pedagogical approach that dominates how people learn about these politics.

Margins of a Global Map

Common to European maps of the Middle Ages were borders filled with drawings of frightening, disfigured creatures believed to inhabit unknown territories that lay beyond the edges of European knowledge. As Mignolo (1998) puts it,

---

market for Indonesians. Illegally harvested wood, including the almost extinct sandalwood, is also another marketed resource from NTT.

> The limits of geography coincided with the limits of humanity. In a matter of two or three decades, however, both boundaries (of the world and of humanity) began to be transformed radically. The outlandish creatures once inhabiting the unknown corners of the world were replaced by the savages (or cannibals) inhabiting the New World. (p. 35)

Today, it is no longer ghoulish border creatures of the unknown or New World savages that frighten, but the number of map marks that indicate mining and potential mining sites.[129] Territories yet to be explored for their potential ore and oil resources constitute "unknown" peripheral territories on maps of global capital concentrated in the world's "centers." Shiva (1997) makes a similar point about unexplored territory when she writes that seeds and women's bodies are among the last colonies being exploited, in which the technology of the gunboat (used to invade and take over lands) has been replaced by the technology of genetic engineering (p. 45).

In the case of Anjaf-Naususu, there are at least two discourses built around this developed center-undeveloped periphery spatial model. One is the discourse of development that insists that mining – a technology of the center – contributes to the development of NTT, and even more so to TTS, both considered to be peripheries. A discourse I develop in opposition to this posits mining in infrastructure-poor locations as an act of desperation.

Although exploitation of marble in North Mollo began with the mining of Anjaf-Naususu in 1998, Papa Tius could name at least eight other peaks in North Mollo he knew had been surveyed during the past few years, suggesting to farmers in Lelobatan

[129] The Indonesian Mining Association has produced maps that mark the location of gold mining (36 companies) and coal mining projects (49 companies) throughout Indonesia (reproduced in Munggoro et al., 1999, pp. 29-30).

that the mining of Anjaf-Naususu was just the first of many planned mining projects.[130] Anjaf-Naususu is arguably the most dramatic case of mining in South Central Timor (TTS), not only because it was the first. Indeed, it may have been by design that the TTS government chose to begin ore extraction from Anfaj-Naususu, precisely for the cluster's renown. If a site with such broad cultural and religious significance could be successfully exploited, it would reinforce the pro-mining argument that traditional values are a thing of the past and TTS is indeed ready to progress into the modern era with the help of revenues obtained through mining. That the mining of Anjaf-Naususu inaugurated marble mining in North Mollo could be read as an open invitation to encourage other mining investors to come rushing in.

The titles of early newspaper articles regarding marble mining in TTS indicate that an almost celebratory air surrounded the government's positive presentation of marble mining. It was presented as the means to tap incredible, heretofore dormant, wealth – "Potential of TTS Marble Can be Produced for 200 Years" ("Potensi marmer," 1997), "Marble deposits in TTS 640,968,000 m^{3}" ("Deposit marmer," 1998), "Tunua marble ready to export to Taiwan, Korea, and Japan" ("Marmer Tunua," 1998). Not only was there great potential for long-term income, but TTS marble would directly link the regency to an international network of capital. The projected rate of increase for marble mined at Anjaf-Naususu was impressive – starting at 3000 blocks in 1998, production was expected to double to 6000 blocks of marble by 1999 and to as many as 20,000

[130] Other marble mining projects in North Mollo, TTS have included the mining of smaller rocks at Nua Mollo (see Chapter 2, p. 93, n. 106) and Tunua (see Chapter 5, p. 271, n. 11).

blocks by 2000[131] ("Juni, ekspor perdana," 1998). Suddenly TTS sounded much less peripheral and less poor.

This discourse assumes that economic development depends on industrialization that, in turn, depends on the extraction of raw resources. As Young (1992) points out, the assumption that "prosperity is synonymous with the quantities of minerals taken from the earth" (p. 41) keeps attention focused on the advantages of mineral exploitation rather than on its environmental impacts. Although not included in the discourse deployed in TTS on behalf of marble mining, national security is another pillar of the mining-is-good argument since "[mineral] supplies have often been equated with military power" (Young, 1992, p. 30). The dual pillars of economic and military might have long been central in images of the modern nation-state. It is these "pillars of progress," supported as they are by the extraction of mineral resources, that compel persistent state support of the mining industry, even if the effort is not consistently profitable.[132]

A less grandiose discourse opens the door to a different perspective, namely that marble mining projects in this region of West Timor are acts of desperation, first on the part of the government that is promoting them and, to a lesser degree, on the part of mining companies. The TTS regency government (*kabupaten*) has mostly exhausted other resources exploited in the past to support itself. Sandalwood is virtually extinct, industrial forest plantations (HTI) have contributed more to deforestation than to

---

[131] Another account estimates only 12,000 blocks will be available for export by the year 2000 ("Juni ekspor Marmer," 1998).

[132] In the early 1980s, demand for minerals decreased at the same time exploitation expanded, causing non-fuel mineral prices to fall almost 30% (Young, 1992). In Indonesia, mining and quarrying output steadily dropped from a high in the late 1960s and early 1970s to a drastic fall in the early 1980s. Production slowly began to increase in the mid-1980s (Hill, 2000). What makes the mining industry so unpredictable are radical fluctuations in world mineral prices coupled with varying levels of production.

renewable wood resources, environmental degradation, in part due to overgrazing, has depleted pastureland so that revenues from cattle are also drying up. Selling the land itself, rock by rock, appears as a last resort of a relentlessly cash-hungry government that has yet to develop sustainable sources of income. Another reason marble mining, particularly in the North Mollo region of TTS, seems a desperate measure is because it is far from an easy enterprise to undertake. Roads and bridges throughout West Timor are few and in poor condition, but in the remote reaches of North Mollo they are often non-existent. The few roads that do exist in the mountains are steep, narrow, rocky, and unsafe. A case in point is the road from the sub-regency administrative town of Kapan up to Anjaf-Naususu that follows the jagged spine of a meandering mountain range separating North Mollo from South Mollo.

In order to mine Anjaf-Naususu, PT. Karya Asta Alam was obliged to widen the road from as far away as the regency capital of Soe to the peaks, a distance of about 35 kilometers. This was to permit backhoes and bulldozers to get in and truckloads of marble to get out. To pre-empt possible complaints about the road widening, the undertaking was much touted by regency officials in Soe as a public service. Company promises to develop the infrastructure by improving a road in very poor condition, particularly the section of road from Kapan up to Anjaf-Naususu, seemed to be a strong selling point with local farmers in hill communities at the top of this range as it would facilitate transport of their produce to the weekly market in Kapan below as well as the marketing of their cattle.[133] Promises of road improvement further linked the mining to a

[133] Buying and selling of cattle in this area of Timor is not done at the market; rather a buyer will contact rancher/ farmers directly in their own hamlets. When enough deals have been struck, the buyer brings in a truck to cart a load of cattle to the harbor in Kupang from where they are shipped to Java.

dominant discourse of New Order development.[134] It was particularly important for government officials to make this link in order to claim that opponents to the mining were opposed to development and the improvement of public services.

Contrary to expectations raised when short sections of the road between Soe and Kapan were improved, a major overhaul of the roadbed above Kapan was never undertaken. Improvements were limited to widening a few sharp bends and providing some cosmetic touch-up on seriously eroded sections, both changes essential to accommodate large mining equipment and trucks.[135] One had only to travel this section of road within a few months after the mining company began work at Anjaf-Naususu to realize that the practice of extracting as much marble as quickly as possible, repeatedly transporting tons of marble on the backs of the heaviest trucks ever used in this part of TTS, was only making a poor road much worse.[136] The company caused further environmental damage when it cut a new gravel road up to the peaks, passing through the pro-mining community of Fatukoto.[137] Several rainy seasons after the mining stopped, it

---

[134] See Chapter 1, n. 27 for an explanation of Suharto's New Order. One of the ways Suharto cultivated his relationship with international agencies was by developing his reputation as *bapak pembangunan* (father of development).

[135] Farmers along this road quietly complained of inadequate or no compensation from PT. KAA for the destruction of productive trees (orange, coconut, banana, avocado) and other losses they sustained when the road was widened through their property.

[136] Two stretches of this road that are close to the edge of steep drop-offs have always been particularly vulnerable to erosion stemming from vehicles and heavy rains, but with the movement of heavy mining equipment and transport trucks, these stretches finally gave way and dropped into the valley below. It took months to complete the minimal repairs necessary for the road to be traversable. These two stretches remain precarious.

[137] The company didn't so much build a road as clear a path through forests and cornfields on the southern side of Anjaf-Naususu. Some opponents of the mining claim this second road was made to provide alternative access should protesters block off the older road that approaches the peaks from the east and north. However, it is also likely the repeated use of heavy equipment over the older road eventually made it so precarious that clearing a new path was far cheaper for the mining company than adequately repairing the old road.

became clear just how much this second, hastily built, path accelerated erosion along the southern flank of Anjaf-Naususu. In retrospect, it is easy to see that the promise of improved roads was a ruse designed to serve desperate ends.

Broken promises regarding road repair that would have enhanced marble transport were not the only signs of despair that characterized the company's goal of profit at all costs. No more reliable than the roads is limited rural electrification that completely bypasses the villages closest to Anjaf-Naususu. By August 1999, the company had brought in generators to light up large sections of the peak so that mining could continue late into the night, accelerating extraction despite liabilities incurred. It was no secret that the lack of medical services within reasonable proximity of the mining site (the closest, and they are very poor, are about an hour away in Kapan)[138] exacted a toll on the workers. Stories of mining-related injuries and deaths, and of bodies surreptitiously dumped in remote ravines, served to paint a sinister picture of the mining company's desperation.

Observing the lengths to which PT. Karya Asta Alam was willing to go to exploit marble at Anjaf-Naususu, I found myself wondering, "Why would investors persist in surveying and mining in such out of the way places on the global map, like at Anjaf-Naususu, where there is no decent infrastructure available to support large-scale mining and where there may be strong local resistance?" That mining sites like Anjaf-Naususu are located at increasing distance from hubs of international communication and

[138] Only a few North Mollo villages have clinics. However, these clinics are so poorly equipped and understaffed as to be insignificant. Neither is the Catholic hospital nor the state-operated clinic in Kapan particularly well equipped or staffed. Further yet from Anjaf-Naususu are a few hospitals in Soe, but the largest one has broken-down equipment, such as its x-ray machine, with no technician available to fix it. The general hospital in the provincial capital in Kupang several hours away is known to be routinely short of oxygen, blood, and surgical thread.

commerce suggests there are fewer and fewer easily obtainable minerals in the world and that we may be rapidly approaching capitalism's last gasp for natural resources. Having taken minerals, gas, and oil from more readily accessible sites, corporations are now encroaching on "resource frontiers" often inhabited by indigenous communities (Gedicks, 2001). As large caches of minerals shrivel, mining in less accessible territories will demand "more energy, water, poisonous chemicals and pollution to dig up the same amount of ore" (Ride, 1998, p. 9).[139] As global scavengers go, the mining industry is particularly ruthless. Mining projects threaten four of every ten national parks in equatorial countries, consume 10% of annual energy use worldwide, are responsible for a large amount of the world's acid rain,[140] and create more waste than the globe's combined municipal garbage (Young, 1992). Case after case supports the conclusion that mining leaves environmental destruction and the impoverishment of displaced communities in its wake.

Suharto, Kissinger, Freeport McMoran

In 1958, during the reign of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, law UU No. 86 was passed to nationalise Dutch companies. Many Dutch colonial enterprises, including some 240 mining companies, were suddenly seized to become Indonesian state

[139] Some might argue it is not so much that resources are increasingly scarce as it is that the profit margin for mining in remote areas tends to be so great (Chapter 2). What I see is a vicious cycle at work where greater profits are sought precisely to meet the higher costs involved in exploiting the ends of non-renewable resources.

[140] Considering the scale of environmental damage caused, the mining industry is not held adequately accountable. "For instance, the U.S. mining industry – though it is clearly among the largest polluters – is not required to report its toxic emissions to state and federal regulators, as are most manufacturing industries" (Young, 1992, p. 6).

enterprises (Mackie, 1971; Munggoro et al., 1999).[141] At the same time, Sukarno sought to bring about cohesion and unity among Indonesia's political leadership through the development of the ideological trinity Nationalism-Islam-Marxism (Communism) commonly known as NASAKOM.[142] Strict price controls during the late 1950s and early 1960s, and growth of the Indonesian Communist Party with its anti-imperialist stance,[143] hardly made Indonesia a welcome environment for foreign investors. Such an unfriendly investment climate, along with the knowledge that Indonesia had rich reserves of valuable minerals, oil, and gas, insured U.S. support for Sukarno's overthrow and Suharto's rise to power,[144] including the massive anti-Communist bloodbath of 1965-1966 in which an estimated half a million people were killed (Gedicks, 2001).[145] The U.S. clearly had a vested interest in seeing a "friendly" government come to power in Jakarta.[146] In the same year that Suharto became Acting President (1967),[147] a U.S.-

---

[141] The confiscation of Dutch enterprises contributed to the military's early consolidation of power. "From the late 1950s the army rooted itself deeply in Indonesia's economy and administration, taking advantage of the seizure of Dutch enterprises and the proclamation of martial law..." (McVey, 1996, p. 21). Munggoro et al. (1999) explain further that in December 1957, Gen. A. H. Nasution issued an order prohibiting the appropriation of Dutch companies without the knowledge of the military. In effect, this meant placing army officers with absolutely no experience in running factories to be in charge of them. "*Inilah salah satu penyebab utama gagalnya program nasionalisasi.*" ["This is one of the main reasons the nationalization program failed."] (p. 11)

[142] For a good introduction to NASAKOM, see McVey (1969).

[143] By 1965, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) claimed a membership of three million, "the largest Communist party outside the Sino-Soviet world" (Feith & Castles, 1970, p. 245).

[144] Part of the economic stabilization policy following Suharto's rise to power was the return of foreign enterprises nationalized during Sukarno's rule to their owners. A general settlement was arranged with the Dutch government to compensate for confiscation of Dutch enterprises (Glassburner, 1971, p. 439). For the Dutch Royal/Shell corporation, e.g., opportunities to invest in Indonesian petroleum at this time were more the reestablishment of earlier business than a new venture.

[145] "...in 1965, high-ranking U.S. diplomats and CIA officials provided lists of Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) members to the Indonesian army" (Gedicks, 2001, p. 92).

[146] It is no secret how U.S. foreign policy has been shaped by the drive to gain access to key resources. Consider, e.g., the U.S. role in the overthrow of Socialist leader Allende in copper-rich Chile or how its Middle East policy is shaped by securing access to vast oil reserves there. Considering this history,

based company secured the contract to mine the ore-rich highlands of West Papua, a project that continues to enrich the political elite in both countries. It is not impossible to imagine that it was this very contract Suharto used as a bargaining chip with the U.S. to insure his rise to power in the mid-60s.

Suharto's rise to power brought with it a radical shift in Indonesia's economic policies, reflected in part by concerted efforts to attract foreign capital that had all but dried up during the last years of Sukarno's rule. The first law passed in 1967 (UU No. 1/1967) encouraged foreign capital by offering "fast write-offs and other tax concessions" (Glassburner, 1971, p. 439), thus overturning earlier legislation that severely limited foreign capital.[148] This was accompanied by other laws, designed for particular sectors, to further encourage foreign investment.[149] For example, Indonesia's

---

it is not unlikely that official U.S. support for Timor Lorosae in recent years (represented in part by its military aid embargo on Indonesia), a complete reversal of its support for Indonesia's annexation of the territory in 1975, has been driven by efforts to insure access to large off-shore oil and gas reserves in the Timor Gap.

[147] In March 1966, the Indonesian Communist Party was banned and Sukarno was pressured into granting Suharto, at the time a General, broad emergency powers. In March 1967, Congress named Suharto Acting President and prohibited Sukarno from political activity until new elections were held. In July of that year, Sukarno's political titles were officially revoked. In the early 1970s, Suharto dropped "Acting" from his title and postponed elections for three years (Glassburner, 1971).

[148] Among overturned legislation was UU No. 78/1958 on foreign capital that had closed the mining of vital minerals to foreign capital and Indonesia's first national mining law, No. 37/1960, another law that had emerged during the period when foreign businesses were enthusiastically being nationalized. Hal Hill (2000), a macro-economist whose general view of the post-1966 Indonesian economy is very positive, cautions against labelling the shift from Sukarno to Suharto as one from a "socialist" to a "capitalist" economic regime: "There remains a deep-seated mistrust of market forces, economic liberalism, and private (especially Chinese) ownership in many influential quarters in Indonesia" (p. 95). I would argue that swings in Indonesia's economic policy pendulum since 1966 have been driven first and foremost by efforts to protect the economic interests of Indonesia's economic and political elite. Those interests have benefited from policies that are far from socialist and have been influenced by such capitalist-oriented international financial institutions as the IMF and World Bank with whom, Hill himself points out, a "close and durable relationship" has been sustained since Sukarno was unseated (p. 79).

[149] That the new legislation succeeded in attracting foreign capital is evident from the statistics. In 1967, 24 foreign investors were approved by the government; by 1970 this had increased to 163 foreign investors. Overall economic growth during the first five year development period (*Repelita*) of Suharto's

basic Mining Law (UU No. 11/1967) grants the state exclusive authority to use minerals "on behalf of the people's welfare" (Marr, 1993). As Muhammad (2001) points out, whereas basic Mining Act No. 11/1967 gives the state authority to *use* minerals on behalf of people's welfare, once it was passed it did not take long before the state began to claim *ownership* of minerals, and certainly not on behalf of people's welfare. The moment the government passed this mining law oriented towards large-scale mining, it began to issue regulations biased in favor of large companies over small-scale and public mining initiatives.

> *Dari kebijaakan [sic]-kebijakannya sendiri, akhirnya pemerintah terjebak dalam posisi lebih rendah dibanding posisi modal yang disayanginya. Akibatnya, pemerintah tidak bisa bertindak tegas terhadap perusahaan pertambangan yang seharusnya patut untuk ditindak.* [The policies themselves have finally trapped the government into a weaker position than the capital it holds so dear. Consequently, the government cannot take strong action against mining companies towards whom such action should be taken.] (Mohammad, 2000).

State efforts that facilitate capital-intensive and large-scale mining in Indonesia do not benefit the people, but rather support the penetration and accumulation of capital, no matter what the impact may be (Bachriadi, 1998).

Taken together, the foreign investment and mining laws of 1967 allowed foreign companies to act as mining contractors on behalf of the state.[150] Mohammed Sadli, a major player in the new designs to attract foreign investment, explained how Indonesia's lack of experience with foreign contracts gave early investors tremendous leeway.

New Order government was 9.4% with the highest growth in the forestry sector (21.4%) followed by 16.1% growth in the mining sector (Munggoro et al., 1999).

[150] UU No. 11/1967 resulted in a shift from mining concessions that allowed concession holders full rights to mine, to work contracts in which only the state or a state-owned company had mining rights. Domestic or foreign mining companies could carry out all mining activities, but only on behalf of the government (Fauzi, 1997a).

> The first mining company virtually wrote its own ticket. Since we had no conception about a mining contract we accepted the draft written by the company as a basis for negotiation and only common sense and the desire to bag the first contract were our guidelines (as cited in Hill, 2000, p. 101).

The mining company to which Sadli refers is the U.S.-based Freeport McMoran. Freeport signed the Indonesian government's one and only "first generation" Contract of Work in April 1967,[151] making its mine in the central highlands of West Papua Indonesia's longest-running foreign mining venture. This contract provided the company with 10,000 hectares of land, including a mountain sacred to the Amungme tribe, to mine *two years before* the 1969 referendum was held in which West Papuans supposedly chose to join Indonesia (Gedicks, 2001).[152] Included among the many concessions Freeport granted itself in the draft that became its first work contract in Indonesia were a tax holiday, exemptions from paying royalties, and freedom to use foreign personnel and goods.

Not surprisingly, this contract enabled Freeport to reap huge profits. A new contract signed in 1991 increased the area of exploitation from the original 10,000 hectares to 2.5 million hectares, making the Grasberg mine the largest gold mine and one of the largest copper mines in the world.[153] This expansion has enabled a nearly tenfold

---

[151] This was Indonesia's one and only first generation contract. A second generation of contracts that lasted from 1968-1972 wiped out tax holidays and allowed for varying levels of royalties. Subsequent generations of contracts have developed over the years with regulations changing from one contract generation to the next, sometimes quite drastically, depending on how Indonesia has chosen to balance investment incentives with its need for foreign revenue (Marr, 1993).

[152] As Marr (1993) points out, Indonesia had effectively controlled West Papua since 1963 and assumed its official sovereignty there to be a *fait accompli*. Some claim that the signing of this contract prior to West Papua's official status as an Indonesian province means that Papua territory was illegally seized by Indonesia. Papuans who have never recognized the joining of their territory with Indonesia consider the Freeport mining contract invalid since it was signed by parties who did not have legal sovereignty of the land under question ("Kontroversi re-negosiasi kontrak," 2001).

[153] According to Gedicks (2001), most of the capital for the expansion of Freeport's operations comes from Rio Tinto, the world's largest mining company with one of the worst records for abuse of

increase in the rate of production in a little over 10 years from 27,400 tons of ore a day in 1989 to 240,000 tons a day by mid-1999 with plans to increase the rate to 300,000 tons a day.[154] Translated into dollars, this mine removed $1.5 billion worth of ore (copper, gold, and silver) in 1997, making a profit that year of $208 million. Drops in copper and gold prices the following year pushed Freeport to accelerate production to its current high level. The mine, now worth more than $60 billion (Gedicks, 2001), may account for anywhere from 65% to 79% of the company's revenues (Marr, 1993), and the end is not in sight. A renewed contract signed in 1999 gives Freeport mining rights for another 30 years, while the Chair of its Board, Milton H. Ward, declared that the company plans to operate in Indonesia for at least 100 years (as cited in Marr, 1993).

Although Freeport is one of Indonesia's largest corporate taxpayers, the line separating state wealth from the private wealth of Indonesia's political elite can be so thin it is difficult to know just what being the largest taxpayer means. Several sources (Marr, 1993; Kronenthal & Taylor, 1995) say the Suharto family owns about 10% of the company; another source claims that then President Suharto received about $400 million a year from the mine (Ride, 1998). Whether the country or certain leaders benefit most, it is clear the Indonesian government has a large vested interest in keeping the Grasberg mine operating profitably.

It is not only Indonesian political leaders whose interests are at stake when it comes to insuring that mining in Indonesia remains profitable. In 1996 Freeport paid

---

native people's rights. This British company began its investment in Freeport in 1995 and as of 1999 owned 14.5% of Freeport McMoran.

[154] Marr (1993) monitors the increase in production as follows: 1989 – 27,400 tons of ore/day, 1992 – 57,000 tons/day, 1993 – 66,000 tons/day, future estimates – 90,000 tons/day. Gedicks (2001) brings the statistic up to date: as of mid-1999, Freeport was mining up to 240,000 tons/day with the intention of increasing this to 300,000 tons/day.

about $730,000 in campaign donations to President Clinton and other members of the U.S. Congress (Ride, 1998), and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is a member of Freeport McMoran's Board of Directors.[155] When the reformist candidate Abdurrahman Wahid was elected President in October 1999, any hopes that he might take drastic measures against Freeport were dashed when he invited Henry Kissinger to be an unpaid advisor to the Indonesian government. At a time when there were increasing demands for the renegotiation of Freeport's contract, Kissinger's advised President Wahid to honor the contract as it had evolved during Suharto's reign with the reminder that Freeport would expect continued levels of security to safeguard its operations (Godlicks, 2001).[156]

The Freeport McMoran case represents a model of economic growth that doesn't work. An export-oriented economy driven by the need to accumulate foreign revenue to service foreign debts begets a vicious cycle. In the process, exploitation of lands and resources that are home to thousands of *masyarakat adat* is accelerated.[157] An important

---

[155] As of 1993, he was also commissioner of the Freeport Indonesia Finance Company (Marr, 1993).

[156] On December 24, 1994, the Indonesian military and Freeport security surrounded and shot into a crowd of about 300 peaceful demonstrators, supporters of the Independent Papua Organization (OPM). Two men were killed and six others killed or disappeared. 13 others were captured and arrested. A discussion of how abuses of *masyarakat adat* rights by Freeport may have strengthened the OPM that, in turn, has made Freeport even more heavy-handed in terms of security for its operations, is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice it to say that the presence of the mine has been one cause for the militarization of West Papua by the Indonesian army.

[157] The two most militarized regions of Indonesia, Aceh, with its armed separatist movement GAM, and West Papua with its armed separatist movement OPM, also have among the largest foreign investment (it happens to be US) in the country. Exxon-Mobil has a large operation in Aceh, and Freeport-McMoran is in West Papua. Separatist movements in these two territories have gained local support because of their clear opposition to the presence of these large companies and the violence that ensues from security provided for the companies. On 31 August 2002, a group of unidentified, armed men in uniform blocked the road and opened fire on a convoy of Freeport-McMoran vehicles headed for the mine. Two US citizens and one Indonesian citizen died, tens more were wounded. Some NGOs have accused *Kopassus,* TNI's special command force, of being behind the murders. The logic goes like this. Because of its long-standing and harsh criticism of the Freeport mine, the OPM is suspected by many to be behind the killings.

reason to highlight this case is because as the longest-running and largest foreign mining investor in Indonesia, Freeport continues to serve as a prototype for mining operations by both foreign and domestic companies throughout the country, beginning with violence towards local communities where mining occurs. To understand something of the politics of Freeport in West Papua is to understand something of the politics of mining throughout Indonesia. In case after contested case, beginning with Freeport McMoran's actions in West Papua, mining companies are responsible for environmental and human rights abuses that the Indonesian government is unwilling to stop.[158]

Undermining *Adat*[159]

Mining undermines the livelihoods, and thus the rights, of local peoples in several different ways. The amount of environmental damage created by any given mine depends on a number of factors, such as the nature of the site being mined, the depth of the deposit, and the mineral being extracted.[160] Surface mining, the dominant type of mining in Indonesia, creates more waste than underground mining. Excavation and

---

This assumption could well precipitate a windfall for Indonesian security forces – if there is a call to crack down even more harshly on OPM, funds will be released by the government for such an operation. At the same time, TNI may gain extra funds from Freeport-McMoran as the company will also feel a need for greater security of its operations. ("Kopassus dituding," 2002, "Diserbu di Timika," 2002, BBC radio interview with Jack King in Sydney, Australia, 2002, 3 September)

[158] For good information regarding mining and its human and environmental impact in Indonesia see Marr (1993), Kronenthal & Taylor (1996), Bachriadi (1998), Munggoro et al. (1999), and Muhammad (2000). Another excellent source for current updates on mining related issues is *Gali-gali* (http://www.mpi.org.au/indon/galigali.html) or its English translation, *Kerebok* (http://www.jatam.org/xnewsletter/newsletter.html), a monthly on-line bulletin published by the Indonesian Mining Advocacy Network, JATAM (home page: http://www.jatam.org).

[159] Although *adat* is usually translated simply as traditions or customs, it is important to stress that the term connotes a way of life. It is not limited to cultural traditions but embodies customary laws that, although they vary from tribe to tribe, govern everything from land use to rites of passage in the human life cycle to penalties for a range of infractions such as livestock theft and adultery.

[160] Young (1992) provides a good overview of the range of environmental impacts created by mining.

removal of ore from a more or less exposed deposit destroys plant and animal habitats, sometimes farm and pasture land, contributes to land erosion, and may, as in the case of Anjaf-Naususu, dry up springs in natural catchment areas. In many cases, however, minerals are not directly removed from the site, but first processed into an ore concentrate. This process generates waste called tailings that often contain chemical residue used in the concentration process. Tailings dumped into lakes or rivers contaminate them. In 1996 alone, Freeport dumped 40 million tons of tailings from its Grasberg mine into the Aijkwa River. These tailings contain chemicals such as dissolved arsenic, lead, and mercury and, to date, have destroyed more than 25 square miles of rainforest in West Papua's central highlands. A nearby lake has also been polluted from acid-generating waste rock that is expected to total about 3.2 billion tons over 40 years (Gedicks, 2001). In locations where smelting or refining of ore occurs there is the further issue of air pollution and the tremendous levels of energy that these processes require. Destruction of land and loss of water from contamination or the disturbance of watersheds traditionally protected by *adat* means that *adat* is also destroyed in the process. To physically disrupt a regime of organic nature is to simultaneously disrupt the social systems that interact with it.

Adat is also destroyed when people are forced to leave land where they live or farm once mining rights to those sites have been issued. One such case occurred in Central Kalimantan where local residents have their own, traditional methods for mining gold. When the area they mine was contracted to a large company in 1988, the company, with help from security forces, forcibly took over the site, using heavy equipment to fill in the holes mined by the local people, and to destroy their homes and traditional mining

tools. Protesters were arrested and held without trial from 40-210 days (Munggoro et al., 1999). To create a favorable climate for large-scale mining investors, the Indonesian government has been prepared to offer guarantees of political stability and security to help protect large investments. Such efforts are backed by the World Bank's political risk insurance intended "to provide protection against losses due to war, insurrection, and breach of contracts" (Gedicks, 2001, p. 30). Government guarantees of stability to investors almost certainly guarantees there will be abuse by military and civilian security forces toward *masyarakat adat* when they protest the presence of mining projects on their traditional lands.

A thick body of New Order legislation legalizes the abuse of environmental and human rights by mining companies and their Indonesian government proxies. As Fauzi (1997a) explains, the politics of mining legislation during the New Order must be understood within a context when agrarian politics were shifting away from populism towards the development of capitalism.[161] During its hey day, the Indonesian Communist Party aggressively promoted agrarian revolution, in which farm workers would own and control their own plot of land, as the essence of democratic revolution for the people of Indonesia. Although less radical than the Party's agrarian platform, Indonesia's Basic Agrarian Law (UUPA 1960) nevertheless sought to reform colonial land policies that catered to the interests of capital. A special Land Reform Committee and Land Reform Court were formed, and by the end of 1964 land had begun to be successfully

---

[161] As with Ruwiastuti et al. (1997), I also use the term agrarian in a broad sense to include "*tanah atau bumi, dan barang-barang atau benda-benda yang terkandung di dalamnya, segala yang hidup permanen (statis) di atas tanah/bumi dalam suatu area atau kawasan tertentu, air dan kawasan perairan, serta kawasan udara tertentu.*" ["...land or the earth, and objects or articles inherent in it, all permanent (static) things that live on the land/earth in a particular area, water and bodies of water, as well as the associated airspace."] (p. 4, n. 2).

redistributed in Java, Bali, and a few other small islands. However, this understanding of land reform disappeared with the destruction of the Communist Party. Although UUPA 1960 has never been legally withdrawn, its original vision of land reform has in fact been nullified by withdrawal or reversal of early regulations for its implementation (Fauzi, 1995). Legislation – the Basic Agrarian Law, the Basic Forestry Law (UU No. 5/1967), the mining law (UU No. 11/1967), and a string of policies that regulate natural resources – and New Order interpretations of it provide the state a legal basis to acquire land through intervention and also to control the management of natural resources.[162]

Masyarakat adat in Indonesia live according to a land tenure system in which consensual land use rather than state-issued land titles hold claim. But from the colonial period to the present day, indigenous systems of law throughout Indonesia, rich in diversity, have never been considered in the formation of legislation, development strategies, or management of natural resources (Ruwiastuti et al., 1997).[163] Thus, contestations regarding resource use must also be understood as contestations over competing legal systems where centuries-old traditional laws governing land use are

---

[162] Although the 1967 Mining Law (UU 11) grants the state the right to use minerals on behalf of the people's welfare, it situates mining rights above land rights when the two are in conflict For example, Section 26 obligates anyone with a legal claim to land to permit mining by a party who holds a legal mining right to that same land. This law further threatens any landowner with a jail term or heavy fine should he or she seek to hamper mining activities on their land (Section 32).

[163] Topatimasang (1998) illustrates how land acquisition through state intervention is in many ways simply a continuation of Dutch colonial policies. "*Pemerintah kolonial Belanda telah membuat banyak sekali perangkat peraturan untuk menjebak berbagai bentuk gerakan protes massa menentang kebijakan resmi pemerintah sebagai suatu tindakan yang dicap menghina kedaulatan negara dengan ancaman hukuman pidana seberat-beratnya, antara lain, pembuangan atua pengasingan..., penghinaan... Semua piranti hukum buatan zaman penjajahan ini pun masih terus digunakan oleh pemerintah nasional Indonesia sampai sekarang.*" ["The Duth colonial government made a lot of policies to trap various forms of mass protest movements that opposed official government policy by labeling such movements as contemptible acts that threatened state sovereignty. [Protesters] were threatened with the heaviest criminal penalties, among others, exile..., humiliation...Up to now, all this legal apparatus, a product of the colonial era, is still being used by the Indonesian national government."] (pp. 148-149).

ignored by the legal system of a comparatively nascent state. Contestations over land and resource use that pit the state vs. indigenous communities reveal, then, that indigenous identity as embodied in traditional laws and social institutions is at stake as much as natural resources when the state claims control of the latter.

The state has further weakened local institutions through measures it claims are intended to insure food security. During the early 60s, when the Communist Party was on the rise, food security was at a chronic low. To offset a food production deficit, Indonesia had for years increased rice imports, but when imports suddenly dropped in 1965 from about 1 million tons to .2 million tons, a serious food shortage, especially in cities, significantly contributed to a growing sense of instability (Fauzi, 1995). It was easy for the New Order (*Orde Baru or Orba*) to draw a correlation between the existence of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) and political and economic disaster – indeed, such a correlation was necessary in order to justify the bloody destruction of the Party. In its efforts to correct what were seen as mistakes of the Old Order (*Orde Lama*), *Orba* was built around two strategic fronts – making food available and affordable, and insuring its political control of rural areas to prevent them from becoming bases for opposition groups.

Fauzi (1995, 1997a) offers a helpful overview of how the latter gave rise to a system of state control that repeatedly displaced indigenous institutions and mechanisms of social organization. To break the relationship of the rural masses with political parties, a law regarding the floating masses (*massa mengambang*) was passed in 1975 prohibiting political parties from opening branches at the sub-regency and village levels. The role once played by political parties at the village level was replaced by a New Order farmers'

organization, *Himpunan Kerukunan Tani Indonesia* (Association for the Harmony of Indonesian Farmers). A range of cooperatives that were once used by activists from various political parties were outlawed by presidential decrees issued in 1978 and 1984 and merged into one government-controlled village cooperative unit.

However, because the state managed to reconstruct the village as a bureaucratic unit on the bottom rung of a high and rigid ladder of New Order power rather than as a social institution to serve community needs and interests, villagers had absolutely no bargaining power in terms of credit schemes, political programs, or cultural agendas (Maryanti et al., 2001). The basic principles of village government (UUPD No. 5/1974) permitted village heads to be elected by villagers for an eight year term of service, but candidates for this election were first chosen and approved by regency (*kabupaten*) and sub-regency (*kecamatan*) officials.[164] This law situated the village head as head of an autonomous territorial region and simultaneously as a regional official, the central government's representative at the village level.[165] This, in turn, helped insure that village heads, directly accountable to sub-regency officials, would remain under the control of an authoritarian state hierarchy. In like manner, provincial heads (governors) became accountable to the President rather than to provincial people's assemblies (DPRD) which weakened these representative groups in several ways – as legislative bodies, as supervisors of the provincial government, and as channels for people's democracy (Koswara, 2000).

---

[164] This practice was still alive and well in North Mollo in 1999 when one of the candidates for Village Head of Lelobatan was rejected by the North Mollo *Camat* (sub-regency head).

[165] Maryanti et al. (2001) explain how UU No. 5/1974 combined rather than separated the function of the village as an autonomous region and an administrative region. In the context of Indonesia, administration does not mean dealing with technical logistics, but always carries a political function (p. 5).

Perhaps best known for hammering the last nails into the *adat* coffin is Village Governance Law No. 5/1979 that directly killed all functions of people's traditional institutions. All previous social and political functions were forcibly merged into one recognized forum called *Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa* (Institution of Village People's Defense) whose members were appointed by the village head. If the village head were also a traditional local leader (which was often the case), then his position as leader within a structure completely foreign to villagers would secure cooptation of *adat* by demanding that he obey his bureaucratic seniors over members of his own *adat* community (Topatimasang, 1998).[166]

Completing this authoritarian structure was the concept of the military's twin function as protector of national security and contributor to national development, the latter of which gave the military a direct role in civilian affairs. Under the guise of performing social service projects such as building roads or bridges, the army was given direct and periodic access to villages to further the New Order's agenda of keeping villages free from subversive influences. Besides periodic visits by troops, villages also have a permanently appointed soldier, usually a sergeant known as the *Babinsa* (short for *Bintara Pembina Desa*, Soldier for Village Guidance) who directly monitors all village decisions and political actions of the village head. He arbitrates village disputes in which corporal punishment passes for discipline,[167] but at the same time is often considered a resident thief who steals local resources.

---

[166] The last column of Appendix D, Changes in Leadership Structure in TTS, illustrates dramatic changes in social-political structures affecting the peoples of TTS. Particularly the offices of president and governor point to a degree and reach of authority beyond anything familiar to Timorese villagers.

[167] One day while sorting documents in a room at the Village Office in Lelobatan, I overheard how "justice" is played out New Order village style. The *Babinsa* had been called to arbitrate in a case where a man had been accused of stealing someone's cow. The Javanese *Babinsa* did not know I was in the other

Following the fall of Suharto when demands for reform were especially pressing, two regional autonomy laws (known as *Otda*, short for *Otonomi Daerah* or Regional Autonomy) were passed in the middle of the Anjaf-Naususu case. UU No. 22/1999 concerning regional government and UU No. 25/1999 concerning financial balance between central and regional governments. These laws were passed during President Habibie's administration, but implementation of them did not begin until 2001 when Wahid was President. They were intended not only to decentralize power, but were also, in part, a response to demands for democracy following decades of authoritarian and corrupt control exercised by both the central and regional governments. Of particular concern were demands for reform from resource-rich regions such as West Papua, North Sulawesi, the Moluccas, East Kalimantan, and Aceh. Anger about the way their resources had been exploited to enrich Suharto and his cronies was threatening to tear apart the country as calls for formation of a federation became stronger. UU No. 22/1999 states that foreign policy, defense, religion, law, and fiscal and monetary affairs remain under central control. The oil and gas industry is also still controlled by the central government. However, control of most other areas, including mining, forestry, health, and education are to be transferred to district (regency/*kabupaten*) levels of

---

room, and even had he known, I'm not sure it would have made any difference. I became aware of raised voices and was then alarmed to hear the sound of slapping. I did not, however, show my face during this public display of discipline. Stories I've heard suggest that such practices are common and not limited to the *Babinsa* who is called in to arbitrate more troublesome cases. In the majority of village cases, the Village Head himself arbitrates and regularly hits offenders as a form of discipline.

Despite the fact the *Babinsa* symbolizes the incursion of the military into civilian space in order to keep the pyramid of power in place, what I saw in Lelobatan suggests that the pyramid is not always rigid. Although the disputes the *Babinsa* arbitrates may appear to be politically insignificant (e.g., local cases of theft rather than subversive political activity), it is important to note how his position can be manipulated by villagers. For example, a farmer is afraid to confront another farmer for fear of family reprisals, so the *Babinsa* is set up to intervene. Rather than condemn the *Babinsa*'s acts of physical violence, farmers expect, even encourage them, and in this way seek to take advantage of the state to advance their own interests and vendettas.

government.[168] In the case of mining, 20% of the revenues go to the central government and 80% remain in the region (UU No. 25/1999, Chapter III, Section 6, point 5).

Now, almost two years after the supposed implementation of these new laws, many aspects remain controversial, not least of which is the shift in control of resources. This is hardly surprising considering the new legislation has prompted dozens of new regulations and decrees as well as the need to amend some 1,200 existing decrees and regulations that conflict with the new regional autonomy legislation ("Confusion and delay," 2001). While on the one hand the central government was eager to shift the costs of the country's massive bureaucracy (that Jakarta could no longer finance) onto local administrations, it was not nearly so willing to divest itself from control of revenue-rich resources. Which level of government has the right to borrow funds from foreign sources or make decisions about foreign investment projects seems suddenly up for grabs, and a new race has begun. For example, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources proposed that in regions not yet ready to manage mining the new legislation should not go into effect for as long as five years. Not surprisingly, he further proposed that a team of government officials and foreign investors decide whether or not a region is ready for

---

[168] Koswara (2000) points out that UU No. 22/1999 marks a paradigm shift for local government. One way it differs from the previous law, UU No. 5/1974, is that it removes the Village Head's dual function. Village Heads are no longer representatives of the central government at the local level, but leaders of local territories elected by villagers. According to the old 1974 law, regional autonomy was understood to mean surrender of political rights and obligations to government institutions. According to UU No. 22, authority to manage local interests will depend on local initiatives based on the aspirations of local people while the government is simply to facilitate implementation of these aspirations. The regions, then, are to stand on their own with no hierarchical relations among them. It seems this would "elevate" the power of the regency (*kabupaten*), or third echelon, level of government that, under both the Old and New Orders, was a step below the province on the hierarchical ladder of state order. Although the hierarchical relationship whereby regencies were subordinate to provinces appears to have been erased, at least legislatively, there are still "loopholes" that would continue to position the regency as subordinate to the province. For example, Chapter IV, Section 9, point 2 of UU No. 22/1999 states: "Provincial authority as an Autonomous Region includes also authority that cannot or cannot yet be carried out by the Regency Region or the City Region" (p. 8).

autonomy when it comes to mining affairs. Foreign investors, favored in the past by the central government and now worried about the possibility of higher taxes that may result as control of mining becomes decentralized, are also putting pressure on the national government not to decentralize control of mineral resources too quickly ("Confusion and delay," 2001).

Although the new 1999 legislation has the potential to introduce reforms that would give local farmers in TTS more control over their lives and resources, it will take time, maybe years, before Suharto's *Orba* culture can be transformed into a culture of democracy. Shifting economic and political power from Jakarta to the provinces and regencies was initially intended to insure the decentralization of power. However, vagueness in the formulation of the new legislation invites heightened competition for power between provincial (second echelon) and regency (third echelon) governments. Until villagers have learned about modern political rights and their role in holding political leaders accountable, decentralization may prove to be nothing more than a multiplication of *Orba* autocrats "[who] behave like petty despots and who merely duplicate at a regional level the Suharto-era practices of resource plunder for maximum personal gain" ("Regional autonomy," 2000, para. 13). It used to be that the governor of a province was the one gatekeeper negotiating access to both the central government and to outside investors. Now a number of *Bupati* are ready and willing to play this role, making their own direct deals with outside investors to secure a larger share of profits. In this scenario, regency governments have greater access to investors while villagers remain captive to economic growth models that ignore their traditional rights and claims to land. Current pressure on regional governments to obtain revenue may not only be to

fund current expenditures, but also to pay off huge debts accumulated prior to regional autonomy when crony capitalism often meant crony corruption.[169] The need to find local sources of revenue to keep the wheels of an oversized regency government machine running and to pay off past debts[170] is a strong argument for justifying the exploitation of minerals.

Although early Asian trade in Timor, and the pre-colonial and colonial mercantile capitalism that followed it, were driven by the exploitation of natural resources, none of these historical periods saw indigenous social and political institutions undermined to the degree exacted by Suharto's New Order government. Not only did New Order mining, forestry, and agrarian laws legalize the massive destruction of native lands, political laws that either co-opted or refused to recognize indigenous systems of law, leadership, and environmental management weakened indigenous communities to the point that even when the laws have changed and there are now ways to democratize land and resource use, the local will to do so is broken. It remains to be seen whether or not efforts to reform Suharto's New Order will succeed, especially at the village level.[171] Although it

---

[169] After Suharto's fall, reports of corruption from the national to the village level began to appear in the media with increasing frequency. Many of the cases covered in TTS involve contractors accused of misappropriating hundreds of millions of *rupiah* for various projects, including road projects and formation of rice paddies ("Hari ini Epy," 2001), skimming of workers' fees ("Pimpro BPPL di Soe," 2001), and inflated prices to the tune of 4 billion *rupiah* for the acquisition of heavy road machinery ("Diduga, DPRD TTS kolusi," 2001). Even long held suspicions regarding a corruption, collusion, and nepotism mafia in TTS have been given media coverage ("Diduga, mafia KKN," 2001).

[170] Just one of the many conversions needed to help shift from a New Order culture of governance to a more democratic one is to convert jobs from the civil service sector in order to dismantle an expensive, overgrown regency government. A large-scale return to subsistence farming could significantly reduce the number of government workers in need of salaries except for the fact that such a scenario is hardly imaginable to government planners.

[171] There can be no doubt that Suharto's corruption and many other abuses were no secret to farmers in Lelobatan. A case in point is the response to a dream I had after I had been in the village about six weeks. One night I dreamed that a huge alligator had been captured. Inside the alligator was a long, fat snake, like a python. Its head could be seen when the alligator's jaws were pried open. The snake had a huge egg-shaped eyeball caught in its mouth that a dog snatched away. Faceless males slit open the

is true that resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu by villagers in North Mollo reaped results on two different occasions, there is nothing to prevent yet another investor from coming in to pick up where PT. Karya Asta Alam left off. For activists versed in the ideology of community organizing, their work in North Mollo is not yet done.[172]

Learning Like an Activist

To study the politics of mining is to immerse oneself in a dense body of literature that charts the evolution of politics during Indonesia's existence as a nation-state and that offers insights into New Order legislation. The number of books published in Indonesia during the past five to six years that presents such information from a critical perspective is impressive. A consideration of the politics of mining is further enhanced by reflection on activist scholars who have committed themselves to developing systematic analyses of the Indonesia's marginalization of *masyarakat adat*.[173] These activists are to be commended, for such analyses are essential tools of resistance, particularly at a global level. In the case of Anjaf-Naususu, the ability to mobilize a network of international

---

alligator's stomach from head to tail and began to extract the snake's body, cutting off a section at a time, each about three feet long. In the dream I know this is meat to be cooked. They pulled and carved, pulled and carved. The snake's body seemed endless. The next day I asked Papa Tius about the dream. He did not hesitate with his interpretation: "The alligator is Suharto, the snake all his sins that are being exposed," this preceded by one question, "Are those who have cut open the alligator the same ones who caught it?" I don't know. I also don't know what Papa Tius thought about the eyeball in the snake's mouth. He never said.

[172] In 2001, a NGO-sponsored team carried out research in selected communities in North and South Mollo that focused on social, economic, political, and gender issues as well as a geo-physical analysis of the land. Results of their findings have not yet been published. Following this research, an activist from a well-known *masyarakat adat* organization in the Molucca islands, and invited by the same NGO who sponsored the research, was stationed in North Mollo, supposedly to study the situation and help local people organize to protect their rights and cultural identity. This is not unlike the strategy used by a different NGO that sent Robert to live in Lelobatan for several months (Chapter 2). Whereas Robert originated from NTT and now lived in Kupang, this organizer came from outside NTT.

[173] *Abih tandeh: Masyarakat desa di bawah rejim orde baru* [Abih tandeh: Villagers under the New Order regime] (Zakaria, 2000) provides a helpful historical overview of Indonesian legislation in terms of its impact on tribal peoples.

protest or to produce press releases that contest the mining requires knowledge not only of that particular case, but also of mining and land laws as well as human rights instruments. As long as the strategy of resistance is to make a convincing case that legal infractions have been committed and human rights trespassed, then legal knowledge becomes paramount. Giving priority to laws and testing the power of adjudication is not surprising given that a main platform of reformist agendas in Indonesia today is reform of the judicial process. Many activists remain focused on Indonesia's legislative and judicial systems. They educate themselves about the way these structures work in order to contest them on their own terms, looking for loopholes and inconsistencies in the law to influence legislation,[174] or to insure that judges are no longer corrupt and that laws are upheld.[175] Some carry an indigenous rights banner, calling for protection of *masyarakat adat* human rights and lands.[176]

My purpose here is not to argue with such strategies, but to critique them pedagogically. NGOs with an advocacy agenda tend to position themselves in opposition to government policies and the officials who seek to enforce them. As watchdogs for democracy they are quick to criticize and condemn, organize demonstrations, and release statements to the press. Their target is nearly always the government. Many government

---

[174] A case in point is the way women activists across Indonesia have rallied to give input on a new anti-domestic violence law.

[175] Many Indonesians regard high profile legal trials as a litmus test for the degree of political reform in Indonesia. High profile cases that Indonesians have watched closely in the past year include the trial of Tommy Suharto and charges against a number of political and military officials who are still being tried in Indonesia's ad hoc Human Rights Court for human rights abuses following the East Timor referendum in 1999.

[176] In a well-crafted strategy to shift state management of natural resources to local communities, the Consortium for Agrarian Reform has for many years lobbied for the recognition of indigenous laws. One way it has done this is by seeking a legal basis on which to introduce variations in land laws or at least to allow for various interpretations of existing laws.

officials, in turn, have with time become inured to such criticisms. Although there are now a few legislators who consistently seek reform of the status quo and may even be guided to some extent by activists within their constituencies, the majority are still a long way from practicing representative democracy. For the most part, legislators and bureaucrats remain open to dialogue with activists, meeting them in forums and sitting on panel discussions with them. In such settings they usually respond unemotionally to NGO criticisms, sometimes noting what is said, sometimes expressing genuine sympathy for opposing views, but in practice activist demands seldom affect policy. What is more likely to generate change, it seems, is when *non*-activists, such as large numbers of farmers or even civil servants, rally in protest. Even then, however, government officials and legislators seek to diminish popular criticisms by denying the protesters legitimacy. They often argue that such great numbers of ordinary citizens would never protest on their own and are surely being backed, even engineered, by the interests of oppositional NGOs. Such an accusation clarifies the ideological divide, but tends to mask some of the pedagogical assumptions that NGOs and the state share vis-à-vis *masyarakat adat*.

Whereas the Dutch colonial government sought to exercise a "civilizing mission" through its schools and churches in the Dutch East Indies,[177] early nationalists saw Indonesia's educational mission to be acquisition of knowledge and skills to promote nation-building. During Sukarno's Old Order, education was promoted as the way to leave behind the old ways of a feudal order and enter a new era that embodied values of

[177] An enjoyable read that gives insight into the nature of this "civilizing mission" is Pramoedya Ananta Toer's famous Buru Quartet (1985, 1981a, 1981b, 1988) that is also available in English: *Bumi manusia* [This earth of mankind], *Anak semua bangsa* [Child of all nations], *Jejak langkah* [Footsteps], and *Rumah kaca* [Glass house]. These novels were originally published in 1980 and then banned six months later by the Indonesian High Court. Since Suharto's downfall they have been republished as a "Freedom Edition" series that, interestingly and I presume politically, includes neither a recent publication date (only information on printings prior to the series ban) nor an address for the publisher (only the distributor).

democracy and social justice.[178] During Suharto's New Order the emphasis on economic development sidelined democracy. Acquisition of technical, scientific, and administrative skills, imagined as key to a modernizing bureaucratic state, contributed to the image of a nation marching bravely towards industrial progress and economic growth. Bit by bit, successive five-year development plans shifted the purpose of learning from socialization of democratic values to social control that drew again on civilizing tropes of colonialism – turning farmers and *masyarakat adat* into good citizens sounds like taming the wild when those people are characterized as primitive.[179]

Demands for reform that brought down Suharto have resulted in laws designed to decentralize not only political and economic power, but also to decentralize education. The *muatan lokal* (local content) program, introduced in 1987 to balance the national curriculum produced in Jakarta with local perspectives on history, geography and culture, got a small boost with the implementation of regional autonomy.[180] In the case of NTT,

---

[178] In a number of his works, Soedjatmoko, a member of the Constituent Assembly of the Indonesian Socialist Party from 1956-1959 and Indonesian ambassador to the US from 1968-1971, wrote of the social transformation needed to usher Indonesia from a feudal into a modern era. See, e.g., *Etika pembebasan* [The ethics of liberation] (1985), *Pembangunan dan kebebasan* [Development and freedom] (1985), *The primacy of freedom in development* (1985), and *Dimensi manusia dalam pembangunan* [The human dimension in development] (1986).

[179] See the beginning of Chapter 5 for terms the Indonesian government uses to stigmatize *masyarakat adat*. The formal education system is arguably the most powerful means of social control the Indonesian state has wielded. Mandatory schooling through Grade 9 that takes children away from their families and villages at an early age seriously disrupts the community's ability to fulfill traditional functions of social reproduction. Children are schooled to become homogenized citizens of a developing nation, a process that alienates them from ways of life that continue despite pressures to conform to those promoted by the development paradigm.

[180] One change brought about by the Regional Autonomy (*Otda*) law is that *muatan lokal* is now supposed to comprise 40% rather than just 20% of primary school curriculum. Common understandings of *muatan lokal* tend to equate it with a rather superficial study of local cultures (languages, dances, customs, etc.). As Tsing (1993) has pointed out, during the New Order, a state-constructed Javanese culture was advanced "to promote stability and dispel the disarray of pre-1965 nationalist politics. "'Culture' is endorsed as an alternative to 'politics,' as *order* is to *disorder*" (p. 24). Insofar as the emphasis of *muatan lokal* remains tied to culture, educational programs claiming to decentralize power may actually perpetuate a New Order method of social control, namely the evocation of culture on behalf of order and stability.

however, the program was beset by problems before autonomy took effect and has never quite recovered. In December 1999, I was told that budgetary constraints made it impossible to mandate use of the *muatan lokal* curriculum.[181] Within a few months, government-backed efforts to distribute the curriculum were hampered by scandal.[182] For the majority of Indonesians, with or without *muatan lokal*, education in the technical and bureaucratic arts of modernity as promoted during the New Order is still seen as a harbinger of individual and national progress.[183] Perhaps this is due to a lack of imagination, a lack of alternatives, a lack of new vocabulary for constructing new images, or simply the lack of reform. As proclaimed by a post-Suharto newspaper editorial ("Pendidikan di era otonomi daerah," 2001), educational development is the backbone of regional economic growth, able to move individuals from economic activities focused on "fulfilling their own needs" to ones focused on "fulfilling market demands for quality goods". Political leadership may have changed, but the "education for economic growth" paradigm continues to dominate.

---

[181] This information is based on an interview (December 15, 1999) with Mr. A.M. Fanggidae, the state university professor of education in charge of producing NTT *muatan lokal* material. Even were the study and celebration of indigenous cultures seen as a serious priority for ushering in a more democratic society, the education system is hardly the vehicle for realizing this. The very notion of a set curriculum, even if possible at a sub-regency level, could not accommodate wide variations in local histories and ecologies found throughout Indonesia. The best people to teach local knowledge are not poorly paid rural teachers, men and women who may not even originate from the villages where they teach, but men and women elders of the villages. As long as *muatan lokal* remains a small addendum to an otherwise national curriculum, it will be nothing more than an excuse to generate funds for books that sit on shelves collecting dust.

[182] When the NTT Governor issued a letter to all *Bupati* urging them to take a 25% cut in their annual school allocations in return for *muatan lokal* materials, it seemed that the governor was trying to benefit the NGO that had produced the materials. Since this NGO was directed by a friend of the governor, accusations of corruption began to fly ("Guna memaksimalkan," 2000; "Kembalikan Rp. 1,5 M," 2000; "Mereka umumnya," 2000).

[183] A critique of modernity is beyond the scope of this work. For the purposes of this paper, I limit the term to mean, primarily, "new" social and political institutions and economic relations that characterized Indonesia as an independent nation-state, beginning in 1945.

Despite the hegemony of this New Order discourse of economic development, especially as it blossomed through the language of nationalism during the late 1970s and 80s, many activists saw it as the structural depolitization of the masses.[184] As a result, many NGOs spent a good deal of time during the 1980s and early 1990s providing some measure of political education to their staff members. During these years I was involved in a number of NGO trainings and workshops in NTT and recall that although the content would vary according to the particular focus of the NGO, most training sessions stressed the importance of experience-based social-political analysis (*ansos*). During these years, some activists in NTT gained exposure to ideas of popular education or to Marxist-oriented economic critiques, often from activists in Java who had better access to Indonesian translations of Freire, Gramsci, and Marx.[185] Many of these activists held a vision of themselves as vanguards of a counter-hegemonic movement in which conformist and reformist NGO agendas gave way to critical education and participatory research that helped people "transform their 'false consciousness' into a conscious

---

[184] After years of repression, Suharto's New Order has given way to the open resurgence of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity as well as conflict that exposes the speciousness of that "order." Current projects in the name of strengthening civil society and good governance are suspect as the US continues to use its influence abroad. In Indonesia this means efforts to merge democracy with global capitalism and now, efforts to rally support for the war against terrorism as well. As George Bush said in a BBC interview (Monday, March 25, 2002), "Free trade fosters freedom and democracy." See also Hippler (1995) who argues that Western governments in general promote democracy as the political expression of capitalism.

[185] Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* was first translated into Indonesian in 1985 (*Pendidikan kaum tertindas*) by Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial (LP3ES). Other of his works, however, were not translated until much later: with Antonio Faundez, *Belajar bertanya: Pendidikan yang membebaskan* [Learning to question: A pedagogy of liberation] (1995, BPK Gunung Mulia), *Politik pendidikan: Kebudayaan, kekuasaan, dan pembebasan* [The Politics of Education: Culture, power, and liberation] (1999, READ), *Pendidikan sebagai proses: Surat-menyurat pedagogis dengan para pendidik Guinea-bissau* [Education as process: Pedagogical exchange of letters with educators in Guinea-Bissau] (2000, Pustaka Pelajar), and with Ira Shor, *Menjadi guru merdeka: Petikan pengalaman* [A pedagogy for liberation: Dialogues on transforming education] (2001, LkiS).

society which knows and names and denounces the ideology and the hegemony of philosophies of dominance" (Fakih, 1991, p. 11).[186]

However, in NTT the advocacy programs of many progressive NGOs privileges activists' education over popular education of the masses that would require in-depth study and appreciation of local ethnographies. These programs also tend to privilege political over economic transformation. As a result of these imbalances, the counter-hegemonic discourse of NGOs is often window dressing for what remains in essence a reformist orientation. For example, much emphasis is given to being well-versed in legislation, particularly the ability to speak fluently a kind of insider's legal jargon. Many young activists display an impressive knowledge of Indonesian law, often able to quote a law's number, the year it was passed, and its most debatable or commendable sections. More recently, education in human rights instruments (conventions, declarations, etc.), as well as skills in investigative journalism,[187] human rights documentation, and conflict resolution – again, mostly for activists – have also run the West Timor NGO gamut. Some pieces of this nonformal education have taken better

---

[186] Fakih (1991) distinquishes three types of NGOs in Indonesia. Whereas conformist NGOs rely heavily on authority in providing such charitable services as famine relief and orphanages, reformist NGOs tend to work closely with the government to make existing economic and political structures work better. In contrast, the structural analysis of transformist NGOs encourage efforts to build a new political economy through land reform and the strengthening of trade unions and cooperatives. Fakih identifies participatory research and popular education as the "most appropriate route for NGOs to create a counter hegemonic movement" (p. 11).

[187] The need for skills in investigative journalism points to a seldom explored aspect of activist learning, namely the skills involved in acquiring protected or secret information. In a context where high-ranking officials control all aspects of development – from identification of sectors to be developed to "courting" investors to negotiating all details of investment – knowledge is indeed power. The ability to make public such elite knowledge, to expose information intentionally kept secret, is one way to disturb the power. It requires, however, an education in tracing what are often secret political documents and financial transactions as well as strategic ways to expose them. For example, were it possible to find out who the shareholders of *PT. Karya Asta Alam* are and how they may be linked to government and/or military interests, then it might be possible to pressure them to take responsibility for the company's broken promises.

than others. For the most part, staff members of advocacy-oriented NGOs in West Timor excel in verbal analytic and networking skills that reflect values inherent in oral cultures. However, they often have difficulty with more literacy-based skills such as the translation of their verbal analysis into writing or the ability to organize and maintain written data in a systematic and sustained manner.[188] Only a few advocacy NGOs in Indonesia have consistently undertaken in-depth ethnographic research and, when they do, it tends to be classically descriptive and naïve to the politics of representation.[189]

Of the many activists who passed through Heum during the months I lived there, many demonstrated courage and fortitude. They approached the necessity of hiking many kilometers over rough terrain with gusto. Some of them had previously stood up to political leaders or had spoken out on behalf of the farmers during opposition to the first round of mining of Anjaf-Naususu in 1998. Yet, despite their passion and, for some, previous experience resisting the mining, they somehow seemed like grains of sand unable to adhere to each other or to the local context so that a hard wall of resistance could be built. As university graduates with an urban orientation, they filtered what they experienced through the lens of modernity in which they situated themselves as teachers rather than students, leaders rather than followers, organizers in the struggle rather than

---

[188] An exception, perhaps, is reflected in several NGO monthly publications whose articles tend to be well researched if not always well written. *Rantai Info* is the monthly publication of FKPB [Forum for Disaster Relief], *Udik* the bi-monthly publication of PIAR [Center for People's Information and Advocacy], and *Saksi* the bi-monthly publication of LAPTIMORIS [Timor Research and Advocacy Institute].

[189] Insight into cultural issues is often presented through a case study approach where a particular case is explored in order to advocate for indigenous rights, not unlike the approach I use in parts of this dissertation. Awareness that advocacy on behalf of *masyarakat adat* is enhanced by careful study of culture is seen in case studies such as those presented in Section 3 of *Reformasi agraria* (Bachriadi et al., 1997), Chapter 2 of *Penghancuran hak masyarakat adat atas tanah* (Ruwiastuti et al., 1997), Pemetaan sebagai alat pengorganisasian masyarakat (Topatimasang, 1998), and *Etnoekologi perladangan orang Dayak Tunjung Linggang* (Lahajir, 2001), a cultural ecology study of the Dayak in a district in East Kalimantan.

listeners. Their approach to advocacy often seemed painfully literate, the result of careful study; some approached the task of organizing farmers as if they were following a manual. They knew the vocabulary of organizing the *rakyat*,[190] some had experience organizing large demonstrations and lobbying public officials to change public policy – all skills valuable in advocacy of local efforts. Nevertheless, the important distinction between organizing a demonstration and building a movement seemed lost on many of them. For the most part they demonstrated little interest in learning local history, the local language, or learning about meanings inscribed on the very landscape they sought to defend. As I noted in one journal entry (August 5, 1999):

> The oral history I witnessed yesterday was one of those historic moments, I could tell...a really fascinating process and I felt like shaking [two organizers present] to get them to realize what was going on – but they were distracted by promises of an organizing meeting in Ajaobaki, so left the gathering early.[191]

I was often frustrated by the tendency to separate the cultural from the political that I observed among many advocates of the *masyarakat adat*. Some of the pitfalls of what were at times their patronizing assumptions might have been avoided had they shown more ethnographic curiosity about local identity and how it is constructed.

What did seem to engage many activists were theoretical debates that perhaps had programmatic value, but were usually issues of little concern to *masyarakat adat*. Following an intensive workshop in 2001 where NGOs in NTT listened for several days

---

[190] *Rakyat* means the masses of common people and carries with it a politically left connotation, much as *la puebla* does in Spanish.

[191] Ajaobaki is the village proper where the last active North Mollo *usif* lived in a palatial dwelling known as the *sonaf*. It is from this palace that Ben, one of the former *usif*'s sons, worked to consolidate support for the mining among North Mollo farmers. By doing so he reversed the traditional meaning of the *sonaf* as protection from danger to that of a gateway that welcomes investors, often experienced as intruders, from the world beyond Mollo. Activists were always interested in trying to foment resistance as close as possible to the heart of support for the mining, thus their particular interest in trying to get something "going" in Ajaobaki.

to stories of successful organizing shared by farmers, *masyarakat adat*, and activists from other regions of Indonesia, a question regarding organizing strategy arose among the activists from NTT. Which orientation for organizing their constituencies had more likelihood of success in the NTT context – an orientation that prioritizes farmers' issues such as commodity prices, land titles, and pesticide control, or one that gives priority to the revitalization of *adat*? In many areas of NTT, the history and means of production of *masyarakat adat* are ambiguous enough to accommodate either identity. Whereas the history of Javanese farmers' organizations, e.g., Petani (*Persatuan Tani Nasional Indonesia* - Indonesian National Farmers' Union) and the pro-Communist BTI (*Barisan Tani Indonesia* - Indonesian Farmers' Guard), provide instructive models for popular organization, a *masyarakat adat* discourse has, in recent years, gained in popularity as a form of resistance to the exploitation of natural resources on communal lands.

Although one solution to the debate might be to move away from posing the option as either/or and consider possibilities for a both/and approach to organizing, some basic differences make this difficult. For one thing, the farmers' organization approach at this point in history seems weighted towards the concerns of farmers engaged primarily in cash crop production. To seek the organization of these farmers without a critique of capitalism (except insofar as it demands a stronger bargaining position for farmers within that system) forecloses the option of subsistence agriculture. In contrast, an emphasis on the revitalization of *adat* allows more freedom to explore options to capitalism, in part because the economic base for so many of the *masyarakat adat* of Indonesia is subsistence agriculture. Whereas the popular organization of farmers suggests "farmer" to be a construct of modernity (farmers are organized along the same lines as factory

workers might be), the construct *masyarakat adat* can expand advocacy to include issues related to history, traditions, and culture. Another difference is that the impetus of solidarity related to these two orientations moves in slightly different directions. Whereas organizing around farmers' issues draws on commonalities of the single, nationwide identity of "farmer," the *masyarakat adat* discourse draws on a politics of identity that encourages reclaiming of stolen identities[192] and alliance across multiple ethnic and cultural differences. One solution to this advocacy debate would be to call for careful analysis of the context to discover which of these two constructs of identity fits best. In contexts where an organic regime of nature (Escobar, 1999) is evident and villagers understand themselves first and foremost as *masyarakat adat*, then efforts to encourage a revitalization of *adat* make sense. In contexts where a capitalist regime of nature is privileged, it may work better for NGOs to direct support to farmers' movements in efforts to resist economic exploitation.

Another question for activist debate, raised during a session at the First Indonesian *Masyarakat Adat* Congress in 1999, is also concerned with effective organizing: Should one choose a people's movement or an issue-based movement in advocacy efforts to oppose large scale mining? In other words, should the organizing logic be constructed around a particular problem (e.g., mining on indigenous lands) or center on identity? Although an issue-based movement may produce faster, more readily identifiable results than a people's movement, the activist who raised this particular issue sees people's movements as having a greater long-term impact (Simanjuntak, 1999).

---

[192] As Luke (1996) says, "Much has been written in Australia about Aboriginal identity – importantly, the reclaiming of lost identities" (p. 12).

Yet another somewhat theoretical issue arose during resistance to the mining at Anjaf-Naususu. During one organizing meeting in Soe, a number of civil servants originating from villages in North Mollo but now living and working in Soe, gathered to discuss how best to resist the mining. One party wanted to resist the mining until local people were more adequately reimbursed. Others more adamantly opposed to the mining for environmental and cultural reasons had no interest in negotiation of any kind with the government or investor. They wanted the mining to stop, immediately and permanently. The issue, then, became one regarding the motivation for resistance: Were resisters motivated by a desire for fair compensation or by a desire to preserve traditional environmental and cultural values? Activists themselves were divided on this score. (See the section, The "Both/And" of Resistance, Chapter 5 for a further discussion on "purity of motive.") The point to make here is that the act of theorizing mass political action and social movement is informed by post-industrial socialist and communist ideologies. At the same time, the social institutions designed to develop a modern nation-state and neo-liberal capitalism that became firmly established during Suharto's New Order have made an indelible mark on the agendas and pedagogical practices of many Indonesian NGOs. This, in turn, has strengthened some NGO advocacy efforts and weakened others in their work with *masyarakat adat*.

In the capital city of NTT, a province labeled as Indonesia's third poorest ("Propinsi NTT," 2001), most of the activists I know hold a college degree and earn a salary. Most of them are computer and internet-literate, and work in offices often equipped far better than schools and civil service or government offices. Some create spreadsheets; some write books, bulletins, and newsletters; some design materials using

digital cameras, scanners, and the latest desktop publishing programs. They are surrounded by books recently published by small, progressive Indonesian publishing houses. Those few activists who originate from villages have returned only to visit since they left during their early teens to attend secondary school. They are adept as brokers who link funds from outside donors to projects in local communities. Many of them have had a great deal of domestic travel that has supported the development of networks with activists in other regions of Indonesia. A few are fluent in English and have international experience. These men and women are at home with the politics, economies, spaces, and expectations of modernity. They may oppose modernity's abuses, but do not question its assumptions. They may hope for a revitalization of *adat*, yet their study of it is designed to assist them in teaching farmers about Indonesian and human rights laws. They may oppose aspects of the status quo, but this hardly changes their relationships to mechanization, consumerism, or to assumptions about the legitimacy and desirability of modern institutions and products of the global market.[193]

The political self-education of many activists in West Timor, the kinds of debates they raise, and the nature of their work all suggest there is no fundamental difference between the epistemological and pedagogical orientation of NGOs and the Indonesian government they often oppose ideologically. Both groups are informed by a post-World War II worldview in which learning is understood as a tool of socialization necessary to nation-building. Activists' study of modern institutions – how political structures, laws, even corruption works – is driven not so much by the desire to develop radical alternatives, as by the desire to make these institutions work better to fulfill their liberal

[193] I include myself in many aspects of this characterization.

and neo-liberal promises.[194] Although differences in ideological orientation result in differences concerning how nation-building is defined,[195] a similar relationship to modernity results in similar assumptions that NGOs and the state make about *masyarakat adat* as those who need help and support to better negotiate modernity. Both NGOs and the state position themselves as "teacher" to help farmers with this negotiation, both through official programs (the state via its education department, NGOs via seminars and workshops) as well as in terms of individual attitudes toward farmers. If farmers are characterized as stupid and backward by the state, NGOs tend to characterize them as naïve and vulnerable to abuse by modern political institutions whose mechanisms, laws, and regulations they do not understand.

I have observed over the years that the primary purpose of official government visits to *masyarakat adat* in their villages is to "socialize" them into a scheme of national development and, in this way, control tendencies towards resistance. Although many of my NGO friends are sharply critical of abuses, particularly of political power in any guise, and promote rather than quell resistance among villagers, they too use the language of "socialization" when talking about their village-level agendas. The NGOs that supported resistance to the marble mining took it on as a project, in the same way government departments take on various projects at the village level, with budgeted

---

[194] This is similar to the position of some feminist empiricists who argue that "sexism and androcentrism could be eliminated from the results of research if scientists would just follow more rigorously and carefully the existing methods and norms of research – which…are fundamentally empiricist ones" (Harding, 1993, p. 51).

[195] O'Neil's (1981/2001) typology that distinguishes six different educational ideologies – fundamentalism, intellectualism, conservatism, liberalism, liberationism, and anarchism – was only recently translated into Indonesian. All these ideologies derive from philosophical schools shaped by modernity that do not address issues of indigenous or local knowledge systems.

funds, approximate time parameters, and periodic reports to funders.[196] Their agenda too was related to restoring a particular image of modernity. Rather than seek to draw farmers into particular visions of development, they sought to draw farmers into visions of democracy where modern institutions could be used to help protect and preserve indigenous lands and resources. This project involved farmers in nonformal adult education, particularly in agrarian law and human rights instruments as they relate to indigenous rights. Many activists who might claim to be involved in a revitalization of *adat* were, in fact, more committed to a revitalization of democratic traditions within modernity. This strong political orientation kept many activists relatively blind not only to cultural issues, but to economic ones as well.

Democracy is assumed to be a human right; therefore, it is not so readily seen that almost all models promoted are ones embedded in capitalism (Hipler, 1995).[197] Although some activists might argue that an agrarian reform agenda intends a radical critique of

---

[196] Time in the field varied for NGO staff. Some came for a weekend or longer in the hopes of meeting with local resisters, some showed up just for the sit-ins/demonstrations, and a few, like Robert, spent several months in the village trying to "organize" the farmers.

[197] Human rights advocacy poses a basic dilemma for activists. As a construct that grew along with the newly formed nations following World War II, the human rights discourse is driven by an imaginary of modernity. This is perhaps most striking in the International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Rights to work and to enjoy safe working conditions, to achieve economic, social and cultural development, rights to a decent standard of living, improvements in means of production, including improvements to farming systems and use of natural resources, etc. assume individual rights over communal ones. More than that, these economic, social, and cultural rights all point to parameters that set the terms of modern development and make cultural imperialism possible. To what extent these rights are seen as a necessary corrective to abuses of the capitalist means of production, and to what extent such rights are assumed to contribute to individual welfare (as touted by capitalism) is not so clear. Indonesia has never ratified this convention, but many of the rights in it are included in abbreviated form in Indonesia's Human Rights Law (No. 39, particularly Section Seven) passed only in 1999. (Although an examination of this law remains beyond the scope of this study, it is important to note that there are no inalienable rights to private ownership, only rights to fair compensation for whatever possessions may be taken over on behalf of "public interests" – *kepentingan umum*, Section Seven, Chapter 37). On the other hand, other human rights instruments such as the Convention against Torture play an important role in protecting people from violence, torture, intimidation, and arbitrary arrest. The need for such protection in the Indonesian context cannot be overstated. Until there is more systematic analysis and

capitalism,[198] such a critique has never had much role to play in the educational agenda of the NGOs in NTT that I have informally monitored over the years. That the emphasis of these NGOs tends to be on developing political awareness and knowledge of the law without giving equal pedagogical attention to unequal economic relations suggests a liberal orientation toward learning that questions abuses of the political system without systematically questioning either the economic relations on which the system depends or exploring/creating alternative economic models. NGO critiques of particular development projects, for example, tend to focus on the environmental and cultural degradation they often cause without equal attention to the economic forces involved.[199]

That many NGOs and the state have similar assumptions about learning as a project on behalf of modernity can be explained in part by the fact that both these groups are distinguished from villagers in terms of class as it cuts along urban-rural lines. No matter what visions may be pedagogically promoted by various discourses, whether capitalist nationalism as promoted by the state or practices of liberal democracy promoted by advocacy-oriented NGOs, the urban teacher-rural pupil division remains the pedagogical bottom line. No matter what participatory approaches may be used, activists enter a case with ideological baggage every bit as heavy as a government official's, often with a clear agenda already in mind. This is not to diminish the solidarity that activists

---

critique of the relationship between human rights instruments and the project of development, human rights advocacy with *masyarakat adat* may easily result in goals and projects at cross purposes with each other.

[198] Fauzi (1997a) does an excellent job of this.

[199] According to Bodley's matrix (as quoted in Ruwiastuti et al., 1997), the NGO practices vis-à-vis *masyarakat adat* with which I am familiar reflect both a liberal-political orientation in which *adat* rights must be defended as well as a primitivist-environmentalist orientation that seeks to halt certain economic development projects that threaten *masyarakat adat*. The conservative-humanitarian orientation explained in the matrix is what some government agencies promote, namely that *masyarakat adat* must be helped to

are able to express with *masyarakat adat*. In many instances their high levels of both formal and nonformal education have contributed significantly to their acts of solidarity. Many have done a tremendous job of building bridges that enable indigenous communities to better understand contemporary Indonesian laws and regulations, to understand the principles of representative democracy, and many have effectively supported *masyarakat adat* in their resistance to outside interventions.[200] As for *masyarakat adat*, many of them have come to depend on advocacy NGOs for help when their struggles move beyond the villages to regency and provincial government offices. But seen from the perspective of the village, much NGO solidarity and advocacy does not shine quite so brightly. The challenge for those of us who identify ourselves as activists is to consider not only the historical, but also the material conditions of our solidarity and advocacy.

The juxtaposition of activists' and farmers' strategies of resistance helps drive home the point about this advocacy division of labor and basic differences in orientation. Because NGO activists understand modern political institutions, that is what they are best at influencing. In the effort to mobilize farmers against the mining, NGO strategies of resistance sometimes seemed reminiscent of post-industrial movements for democracy and agrarian reform. The delegation of local representatives to meet with cabinet ministers in Jakarta and an international anti-mining lobbying campaign were somewhat effective[201] because those who initiated these tactics had the required telecommunication

---

get the best deal for themselves in the inevitable march towards progress. The different orientations presented in this matrix, however, are developed along a political rather than economic axis.

[200]Advocacy must also be considered a form of outside intervention.

[201] I say somewhat because the timing was off. The NTT Governor was bombarded by letters from central government ministers and international environmental NGOs as a result of this campaign six

knowledge and skills, access to the necessary networks, equipment, and funds, and knew how to exploit a global imaginary on behalf of environmental protection. Although many of their efforts were helpful, some were not.

During my months of field research I had opportunity to observe first-hand a number of activists from several different NGOs who stayed with Papa Tius and Mama Maria. They arrived, as I had, without calluses on their hands and feet, but unlike me they had no interest in acquiring any. Without exception, these activists did not help with farm labor – not once, not even when they stayed for weeks. At best, they helped in the kitchen and with some domestic chores, but I never saw an activist help to plant, weed, clear fields, mend fences, collect firewood, or turn the soil. Having left their office work regulated by office hours, a trip to the village was, for many of them it seemed, a "field outing" and they seemed to assume that because farmers have no office hours, they too must be on holiday. For the most part these activists seemed oblivious to the fact their hosts had work to do other than to sit and talk with them.

More than once I saw activists act as if they had a right not only to villagers' hospitality, but also to produce from the gardens. They did not ask before they freely picked fruit off trees to take back to the city with them. Others might unashamedly ask to be given a chicken or coffee beans to take with them. Away from the city, they ignored economic terms of the market while also playing dumb to local terms of reciprocity, thus exploiting the very people on whose behalf they claimed to advocate. Such behavior might be dismissed by some as simply poor manners. In fact, it betrays a deeper

---

months before villagers wrote their own letter of protest and a year before they began their sit-ins. Although some might argue that the pro-active nature of this NGO-initiated lobbying campaign was encouragement for later, more local initiatives, I think this reflects the bias of many NGO staff who position themselves as progressive teachers at head of the activist class.

prejudice. Similar to government officials who, when they visit villagers in their homes, expect to be treated as royalty according to feudal norms, many activists also acted as if they had a right to take from villagers. Farmers occasionally complained to me about activists with an apparent allergy to farm labor, city-oriented young people who talked big, but worked little. For these activists, solidarity is limited to various dimensions of legal advocacy, but does not extend to field labor (see Chapter 6). The Indonesian Communist Party once taught its cadres to directly know and study farmers by sending them into the villages where they held discussions, and consolidated and broadened Party membership. These cadres were taught three methods, namely "*bekerja, bertempat tinggal, dan makan bersama petani miskin*" (namely: work, live, and eat together with poor farmers; Fauzi, 1997a, p. 78). The advocacy activists I know would be well served to take to heart the injunction to work together with farmers in the field as easily as they live and eat with them because it is an essential aspect to the development of mutual trust. For those whose modern worldview is dominated by capitalist time and nature (Escobar, 1999), even appreciation of local knowledge and customs may not be enough to help bridge epistemological and hermeneutical differences that separate activists from farmers.

In contrast to the NGO strategies, the farmers' repertoire of resistance strategies was more varied, their methods tailored to accommodate the differing worldviews of the individuals and institutions they targeted. Vis-à-vis modern institutions, they sought support from NGOs and the church, directly confronted government officials, signed letters of protest, and drew sketch maps. They used more "organic" forms of resistance and revitalization when relating to fellow villagers in North Mollo. These strategies included the rehearsal of local history, placing curses, construction of genealogies, efforts

to renew long-dormant political alliances with the powerful Sonbai clan in Bikau Niki (a village beyond the boundaries of TTS), and gossip. Spying, another strategy of the farmers' resistance, might be called a border strategy since it can be interpreted either way. As a tool of espionage honed by modern nation states, it seems to be clearly a "modern" tool of resistance, and yet the spying focused on internal social relations. It was built on local family ties and relied on local language as well as knowledge of the local landscape so that meetings between Papa Tius and his spy would not be seen or, if seen, would not seem unusual. Rather than having a direct political impact, spying was just one more strategy aimed primarily at bringing Ben, a co-signer of the mining contract, to ruin, for from the perspective of the anti-mining protesters his was the greatest and most damaging betrayal. The point is that the farmers seemed to have a better sense than the activists that different relationships to modernity as expressed in epistemological orientations required different strategies of resistance.

The order from Sonbai to hold off on a mass demonstraton since other, more "natural," paths of resistance had already been initiated (namely the curses he performed), identified the real battlelines of the struggle as far as these caretakers of Mollo customary law were concerned.[202] They wanted to stop the destruction of Anjaf-Naususu for both ecological and cultural reasons because, as I stressed before, destruction of the mountains was destruction of their (organic) worldview, their cosmology, and their

---

[202] As idyllic as Bikau Niki may have seemed as a site where native ecology and *adat* have been wonderfully preserved (see Chapter 2, p. 86), it should be noted that Papa Tius and the entourage from Lelobatan were still honest enough to paint a realistic picture of life there. Although the Sonbai clan has so far managed to turn away all investors who want to exploit their land, and have also rejected government aid money, they recently accepted project funding from Plan International. They are also selling some of their teak trees to strengthen their cash economy. What seemed to impress the men from Lelobatan, however, was that the Sonbai clan appeared to be successfully negotiating between two worlds and economies on their own terms.

identity. The protesting farmers sought to protect members of their communities from entering so totally into a world of commodities that they would no longer be able to read the signs of nature and forget the "gate and path" (McWilliam, 1989). According to the men who reported on their visit with Sonbai, Chief Neno Saen never said in so many words what he understood so clearly, namely that the choice to support or resist the mining was essentially the choice between the atomization of modernity and the communality of *adat*.

I too am an activist and have been influenced by nonformal educational methods and ideologies encountered through my work with NGOs in West Timor. It is the "activist" in me that devotes this chapter to the politics of mining and a discussion of the pedagogy it entails. Along with the activists I critique, I too am shaped by worldviews and institutions of modernity. I too am convinced of the need for political education, at both the NGO and village levels, an education that teaches about human rights and the history of abuse by the state. When I engage with this literature and share critical insights from those who have studied the politics of resource use, my voice is also a voice of information and description. It is a voice I have worked to hone, primarily through writing. It is the voice I use to foreground legal struggles to protect the rights and lands of Indonesia's *masyarakat adat*. And yet I recognize that to position another person, whoever he or she may be, as disenfranchised, marginalized, or oppressed is not only good business for advocacy groups, it is often their raison d'être.[203] So a question I must

[203] On several occasions Papa Tius privately complained to me about NGOs that just wanted to *menjual kemiskinan* – sell poverty. My first clue that this phrase had, perhaps, become a cliché was when a professor friend of mine who lives in the city used the exact same phrase to express her disgust with NGOs she felt have more vested in self-image than in helping exploited farmers. Since then I have heard the phrase used several times by different people, including NGO staff who apparently want to distance themselves from this possibility by pointing their finger at others.

ask myself, and others, when the voice of the political activist more familiar with the city than the village takes center stage is: What assumptions are being made about local peoples and their culture? Or, as Harding (1993) puts it, "What is the role for marginalized experience in the standpoint projects of members of dominant groups?" (p. 62). This activist voice of mine that I know so well and have so frequently used begins to feel incomplete when faced by such questions and I struggle to find other ways to write and speak. I want to learn a more integrated resistance, one that pushes me to give as much critical attention to assumptions I have made about the people on whose behalf I or others may seek to advocate as I give to understanding structural analyses of the politics of mining and the role they play in the disempowerment of *masyarakat adat*. It is why I move away from the cities and activist theories and debates to other sites, for it is from other sites that I hear other voices, am invited to consider other "literature," and learn other lessons. I move to the mountains of South Central Timor, for that is where I was most enabled to read the world differently.

CHAPTER 4

NAU'S MILK, MAMA MARIA'S KITCHEN
A PLAY IN 3 ACTS

Dramatis Personae

Act I.

PAPA LIUS: local oral historian, descendant of King Oematan

PAPA TIUS: historical commentator, Mama Maria's husband

GRANDPA YUNUS, ***OM*** **TOMAS**, ***OM*** **FANUS**:
community elders who assist Papa Lius with historical recitation

YOHANIS, SEFNAT: college-educated youth who have returned to the village, commentators on local history

KAREN: researcher, writer, activist, translator, recent playwright

YERI: Karen's research assistant

ELLA: professor of cultural and women's studies, co-author of *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (Shohat & Stam, 1994)

Act II.

MAMA MARIA: head of kitchen, Papa Tius's wife

MAMA DEBORA: Mama Maria's oldest sister-in-law, has lived in Kupang since a young teen

MAMA RUT: Mama Maria's sister-in-law, lives alone just up the hill from Mama Maria's kitchen

DINA: Mama Maria's youngest sister-in-law and Mama Debora's youngest sister, lives with her father (Grandpa Sarus), her husband, and children just down the hill from Mama Maria's kitchen

HELENA: Mama Rut & Dina's half-sister (their father, Grandpa Sarus, practiced polygamy for many years; his relationship with Helena's mother, his second wife, was never recognized by the church), active member of local, charismatic Prayer Group

ANA: Mama Maria's youngest sister, main anti-mining organizer

VANDANA: Director of Science, Technology, and Natural Resources Policy in India, co-author of *Ecofeminism* (Mies & Shiva, 1993) and more

Act III.

SANDRA: philosopher, author of *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (Harding, 1991)

DONALD: anthropologist, author of "The crucible of cultural politics" (Moore, 1999) and "Subaltern struggles" (Moore, 1998)

DIANNE: professor of geography, one of the editors of *Feminist Political Ecology* (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter, & Wangari, 1996)

GHOST OF UNIVERSITY PAST: Draped in a white sheet, drags around chains of books and educational CD-ROMs

***NENEK* NAU**: grandmother and rock

****

Act I: The Mountain

Scene I: Oematan's Front Room

The front room of the Oematan home in Lelobatan hamlet, West Timor.

[Lights come up slowly downstage left where a group of about 10 Timorese men are standing or sitting in plastic chairs along two sides of a small table on which sit a tape recorder with a small external microphone propped up beside it and a small rectangular basket filled with betel nut. Two of the men sitting in chairs are engaged in an exchange of betel nut. The others are busy grooming themselves – retying their *selimuts* (traditional woven blankets tied around the waist with a long woven belt), tying batik headscarves on each other, arranging woven bags over their shoulders. All the men, except Yohanis and Sefnat, are barefoot and in traditional attire. Yohanis and Sefnat are wearing slacks and shirts with ballpoint pens protruding from the pockets; Yohanis is wearing thongs, Sefnat shoes. Two older village women, wearing the traditional

Indonesian *kebaya* (a long-sleeved tight-fitting bodice) over their woven sarongs, sit quietly to the side. Karen, the one non-Timorese present, and Yeri sit across from the men. Karen is busy scratching notes into a notebook; Yeri is checking the tape recorder.]

SEFNAT: Are we about ready? Here Papa Lius, let me straighten your *destar* (*he fiddles with Papa Lius's head scarf*).

[The men arrange themselves in a close huddle, with Papa Lius standing slightly in front of them. The two Timorese women remain sitting. While nudging Karen with his elbow, Yeri lifts his chin, signing her to stand up with him. Karen sets her notebook on the table and stands up with Yeri to face the men; Yeri extends the microphone in **PAPA LIUS**'s direction. Papa Lius raises his voice in a strong sing-song to begin the *natoni*, a fast-paced antiphonal ritual speech. Papa Lius is the lead soloist with the **CHORUS** behind him always shouting out its responses right on the tail end of Papa Lius's lines.]

PAPA LIUS: It's like this, ooo. Right now we sit and are gathered, but not in vain.

CHORUS: Right here!

PAPA LIUS: Because today we want to tell a story of our ancestors.

CHORUS: Right here!

PAPA LIUS: So that's why we're gathered like this.

CHORUS: Like this!

PAPA LIUS: Let us gather here like this with one heart, one soul.

CHORUS: So we are one!

PAPA LIUS: One heart so we can continue all the stories of our ancestors that they may be true.

CHORUS: For truth!

PAPA LIUS: Truth in retelling it all, may all the stories be complete and may nothing be left out.

CHORUS: So all that is, is true!

PAPA LIUS: Because today it is not the little brother himself, or the older brother himself who is present, but today the yellow one, the black one, also the white one are present, all are present and accounted for.

CHORUS: Right here!

PAPA LIUS: So that as we continue this talk it may be smooth and without mistakes.

CHORUS: For truth!

PAPA LIUS: So that it is true. And may no obstacles be met during the telling, may all flow smoothly and all stories told be recited well.

CHORUS: Just so!

PAPA LIUS: For in a moment may we recite all of it.

CHORUS: Like this!

PAPA LIUS: So that those who hear may know all the stories.

CHORUS: Know!

PAPA LIUS: Know, and may there be no obstacles.

CHORUS: And likewise

PAPA LIUS: And likewise may all the stories be truly straight.

CHORUS: To know!

PAPA LIUS: May we hear all of the recitation, to know and always remember.

CHORUS: To know!

PAPA LIUS: To know, also because we now are complete.

CHORUS: So that

PAPA LIUS: So that shortly we will tell the story because now the yellow, the black, the white are here, they are truly complete.

CHORUS: So all is well!

PAPA LIUS: All well so in a while we'll speak of how the story goes.

CHORUS: Like this!

PAPA LIUS: Certainly true, so we want to recite it all because all is complete.

CHORUS: So that

PAPA LIUS: So that during the recitation all stories will be complete.

CHORUS: Let it be so!

PAPA LIUS: So the story will flow and be true.

CHORUS: So it's true!

PAPA LIUS: True so that in the future this recitation will remain true and straight.

CHORUS: So it is all true!

PAPA LIUS: So all who are old and young may hear and know.

CHORUS: So all know!

[There is a moment's pause as if those present are waiting for the ancestors to respond. The energy of the moment is broken as the men, Karen, and Yeri, return to their chairs around the small table. Several men take out betel nut containers and begin to chew, talking quietly to each other. Only Sefnat remains standing, whispering inaudibly down to Papa Lius.]

SEFNAT (*standing erect*): We have invoked the ancestors' presence. Let us now seek God's blessing. Then after that we will shake hands. Let us be one in prayer, let us pray:

Father in heaven, this evening we are here, Lord. For a long time we haven't known each other, but there is one moment You have chosen for us, Lord. We know that You arrange everything in its own time. And Lord, come down and intervene in each matter and deed to bring about goodness. We believe in Your Word, O Lord. If this evening it is Your Will that we gather, we also ask that You make this event wonderful for us. Therefore, may the justice of Your Servant be present together with our families, especially in the Mollo Kingdom.

Today we want to recite history, but we ask for your intervention. O God, grant us Your Wisdom and Authority. May it not be our ability, but the power of Your Holy Spirit that fulfills us. Especially for Your Servant who will be used this evening, we ask for the strength of Your Holy Spirit. Bless him and grant him God's wisdom and authority so that what he recites is not according to his own ability, but comes through the whispers of Your Holy Spirit, because we know that each and every thing that was put in place by our ancestors was a portion of God's gift of love. So bless each person who plays a role here this evening. May it all proceed in the name of Christ Jesus. We also ask, Lord, that you bless the equipment so that it is used for the honor and glory of Your Name, for we believe we do this not for today but for the future. Therefore, Lord, bless all of us and may this event proceed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Forgive us, Father. In the name of Jesus Christ we have prayed to the Father in Heaven. Alleluia. Amen.

PAPA LIUS: (*bent towards Om Fanus, speaking in a loud whisper*): OK, so I begin with the ancestors arriving in Timor and then mention the places they landed and where they lived.

***OM* FANUS**: Be sure to mention *Mnela Ha Hae*, that's pretty important.

***OM* TOMAS**: Before that, *Gunung Tem*. It was around there Oematan first planted water.

PAPA LIUS: Right.

***OM* FANUS**: And don't spare any words about Bi Nau. *Ibu* Karen wants the scoop on Naususu, so the story of Bi Nau is central, OK?

YERI: OK, I think we're ready. (*Yeri puts ear bugs in his ear and fiddles with the tape recorder. He then leaves the recorder and mike on the table and leans back in his chair to listen, motioning with his hand to Papa Lius to begin.*)

PAPA LIUS (*straightens up in his chair, clears his throat, and slightly raises his head as he begins to recite over the heads of Karen and Yeri who sit across from him*): In the beginning, the three largest tribes on earth were those with yellow skin, white skin, and black skin. They were once siblings from one ancestral womb. In the history of the Bible they were the children of Noah. Ham had black skin and his descendants are now the aboriginals of the African Continent. The descendants of Shem had yellow skin and they are the people of the land of Timor. Japheth, the one with white skin, had descendants who are Westerners who originate in the West. These three siblings can't be divorced from each other because they originate from one ancestor.

Three siblings, one ancestor. Now these three come from a place called Baraka Hindia Continent to a place called *Nun Henun Oekus*. (*Karen leans over to get her notebook off the table and jots a few notes in it.*) After they landed at *Nun Henun Oekus*, they went out from there with the only purpose being to observe the breadth and narrowness of the territory of Timor. And from *Nun Henun Oekus* they arrived at a cave

called *Gua Plas Lili* where they collected poisonous bullets before they returned to *Nun Henum Oekus*. And after returning to *Nun Henum Oekus* they got back on the boat they'd been using and sailed around in the western regions of *nusantara*. After sailing awhile they laid down the gangplank at a place called *el nonjem ma se noni*, which literally means they descended from a golden or metal ladder at that spot.

And after coming down the golden ladder they came to a place named *nunu kobanam tannau las* where there is a banyan tree with only two branches. One branch pointed towards the sea, the other towards the island of Timor. And here the three siblings made a covenant – a promise with a sweet smile, *kumanim taseon*. Here they remembered their past together, all the places they had seen together throughout Timor island, observing its breadth and narrowness and all its boundaries.

And after they recalled these events, at that place they gave each other important messages for all to remember together. The yellow-skinned sibling, who was the oldest, gave a message to the two younger siblings who were black-skinned and white-skinned, saying: You who hold all ideas and miracles, you return to our place that is the wide continent. Return with all the ideas and expertise you have acquired – how to make batik cloth and turn it into clothing. And if we lack machetes, spades, axes, or such cloth, we will ask for it from our younger siblings who are black and white-skinned to give these to us. Then the younger siblings gave a message in return: You remain here on this smallest of islands and guard and hold on to the wax from honey and also hold on to the sandalwood that is here. If we lack wax and sandalwood, we will ask you to help by giving it to us.

So together they agreed that if one lacked something he would exchange items or order things from the others. This was a reminder for them to love and remember each other when they separated at the place called *nun henum oekus – nunu kobamam tamnau lasi*. When they separated at the place named *nunu kumanim taseon – kobamam tamnau las,* this is when Oematan emerged as a leader, one with power and one to move the people. Together with the *amaf-amaf* as movers and *meo-meo* as movers of the people, together with several clans led by Oematan they left and went to a place named *skuku un mna mnela un* and they settled at that place.

KAREN: *Aduh*, Papa Lius. I'm very sorry to interrupt, but I'm overwhelmed by all the place names. Mind if I ask a few questions?

PAPA LIUS: Not at all, *ibu*. Go ahead.

YERI (*in a loud whisper*): Do you want me to keep recording this?

KAREN (*shaking her head, she leans towards Yeri*): No, there's no need. (*Yeri leans forward to hit the pause button on the tape recorder. Karen straightens up, speaking to the elders.*) OK, the *meo-meo* were the warriors, right? And the *amaf-amaf* were … sorry, I keep getting confused about them.

GRANDPA YUNUS: *Amaf-amaf* were the wife-givers – those families from whom the King and his brothers took wives. It's how the early kings built close alliances with other families. The *meo-meo* carried out raids against other tribes and protected the borders of their tribe's territory.

KAREN: I don't hear people talk much about the *meo-meo*, but it's different with the *amaf-amaf*, especially since the mining of Anjaf-Naususu began. It seems almost

everyone opposed to the mining wants the *amaf-amaf* to take a stand against it. Is it true that the *amaf-amaf* could still claim cultural authority if they wanted to?

PAPA TIUS: It's like this, *ibu*. Intertribal warfare disappeared a long time ago, and so did the *meo-meo*. But until 1994 we still had a king, *Om* Sem Oematan. The government may have thought *Om* Sem was just a figurehead, a remnant of the past, but they didn't know. *Om* Sem had a kind of local authority that government officials will never have. I regret he never called together the *amaf-amaf* to name a successor. Ever since his death we've suffered from a leadership vacuum. If we have problems with our land or resources, they almost always come from the government ...or from investors; they're a more recent problem. But there's no longer a king we can turn to who can help us protect our land. What we do still have, or could have, are the *amaf-amaf* families: Seko-Baun, (*Papa Lius, Grandpa Yunus, Om Fanus, and Om Tomas join in reciting*), Fuij-Sunbanu, Toto-Taneseb, Nani-Lasa.

***OM* TOMAS**: What about Mella-Sanam?

GRANDPA YUNUS: They're in South Mollo.

***OM* TOMAS**: Well, yes, they are now, but there hasn't always been a North and South Mollo. Before it was just Mollo.

***OM* FANUS**: How about Boko-Balan?

PAPA TIUS: They aren't as important as the other eight.

***OM* FANUS**: I'm not so sure about that. (*Om Fanus, Papa Tius, and Grandpa Yunus begin to argue in Timorese.*)

PAPA LIUS: You see, *ibu*, there is some variation regarding just how many *amaf* families there are, depending on who you talk to. But there's no disagreement about the eight major families. We all know who they are.

KAREN: I see that. But why would the *amaf-amaf* survive as a social category, at least a potential one, if the *meo-meo* didn't?

YOHANIS: When we still had a king, he was chosen by the *amaf-amaf*, so traditionally they had a lot of power as well. They were also the ones who worked the land and so could claim it; the king just received their tribute, but he never had land of his own that he could claim beyond his palace grounds. These days, we don't have a king, but we **do** have government officials, it's just that they don't protect our interests. Because we still know who the *amaf-amaf* families are that's where a lot of us in the village place our hope. Over the past several years there's been an effort to try to get the *amaf-amaf* to come together and play the role they once had.

KAREN: Isn't that a bit nostalgic – trying to hold onto a traditional social structure that the state doesn't recognize?

YOHANIS: Not everyone thinks that way. For many of us, this is the only way we can imagine protecting ourselves – our land and our culture.

KAREN: How's that?

***OM* TOMAS**: If the *amaf-amaf* could be strong again, maybe they would elect a new king. At the very least they could help the people of Mollo be more unified. Right now it is easy for an investor to come in and buy up little bits of land very cheaply from this or that family by giving them a generator or some sheets of zinc for a roof or by promising scholarship money for their children to go to school.

SEFNAT: What makes revitalization of the *amaf-amaf* so difficult is that there is no recognized leader to call them together as the king once did.

GRANDPA YUNUS: *Amaf-amaf harus tahu diri*; they have to know themselves. If they know who they are, they'll be brave and protect Mollo.

KAREN: Well, what about the *amaf-amaf* mentioned along with Oematan in the recitation as being movers of the people? Were they together with the siblings? I mean at first it sounded like there were just these three siblings traveling around exploring Timor, but by the time they get ready to go their separate ways, there are suddenly all these other people mentioned – the *amaf-amaf* and *meo-meo*. Where did they come from?

[Papa Lius, Grandpa Yunus, *Om* Fanus, and *Om* Tomas look at one another, shrugging their shoulders, a bit confused.]

YOHANIS (*breaking the silence, he speaks hesitantly*): Umm…I'm not really sure, *ibu*, but I think there is a major shift in the story when the name Oematan is introduced. What we've heard up to now is a kind of settlement history, beginning with people who arrive on the island. By the time Oematan comes on the scene, the story shifts from talking about travelers from afar to talking about the adventures of Oematan. So we're probably at another point in time when local social organizations were already in place. (*The elders gathered nod their heads, relieved to have someone who can answer Karen's question satisfactorily.*)

KAREN (*thoughtful*): Yes, I see. Or perhaps as the story gets handed down from generation to generation, later generations insert social categories familiar to them into the history. Or, even more significant perhaps, is how this relates to origins of identity. I wonder, do the people of Mollo identify themselves as descendants of immigrants or as

indigenous – as the anthropologists would say, as autochthonous? The way this story is constructed it almost sounds like you are trying to lay claim to both legacies. Maybe what we have here are two stories – a story about outsiders and one about insiders – that have become merged over the years. I guess one big social-historical analysis project would be to try and figure out the various layers of the story, connecting some of the clues with particular historical periods (*she jots down some notes in her notebook*).

***OM* FANUS** (*takes out some betel nut and whispers to Om Tomas*): Do you know what she's talking about?

***OM* TOMAS** (*shakes his head*): Give me some betel nut.

KAREN: OK, let's see… I had some questions about place names (*flipping through pages of her notebook*). Some of them sound real familiar. Here's one. Papa Lius, you said they departed from a place called *Baraka Hindia* Continent, right?

PAPA LIUS: That's right.

KAREN: Well, I have a theory about that. You know how people in Mollo switch around *l*s and *r*s when they speak? For example, I know a young woman whose full name is Leonora, but she's called Nola. And I've heard villagers from Mollo call people from the Amarasi tribe, Amalasi. So what if the "r" in Baraka were actually an "l"? Then the name of the place would be Balaka and that sounds just an awful lot like Malacca. (*Karen is met with blank stares.*)

YOHANIS (*eager to break an awkard silence*): I seem to remember reading something once about Malacca in a regional history class I took at the university. It's somewhere in Malaysia, right?

KAREN: Yep, on the southern tip of the peninsula. What I remember is that many centuries ago, when Portugal had colonies all over the place, the Portuguese built up port cities along the coasts in Brazil, Africa, India, Indonesia, China. These ports served the sailors as they criss-crossed the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. They were sites for commodity exchange, hubs of mercantile capitalism. Malacca was one of those ports. To this day there is still a Portuguese-speaking community there, descendents of those ancient sailors.

PAPA LIUS (*a bit hesitant*): So you think the siblings who arrived on Timor were Portuguese from Malacca?

KAREN: Possibly, and surely from other places as well. The story itself says they came from Hindia Baraka Continent. Hindia probably means India, or maybe Hindia Belanda, as in the Dutch Indies Company. So both the Hindia part and the Baraka part, if it means Malacca, are signs of colonialism that have been preserved in your history. This part of the story seems to be talking about sailors who were carried by trade winds to this island and then settled here.

SEFNAT: Trade winds?

KAREN: In this part of the world, the colonizers traded things like batik cloth, tools, and pottery for spices and sandalwood – your story mentions wax and sandalwood – items they could sell in Europe for a huge profit. The winds that blew their ships across the ocean changed from season to season, just as they do today. You know how there is an east wind, during the dry season and a west wind, during the rainy season? Well, it's the same in the ocean. If you want to sail in one direction you wait for the winds that can

carry you that way. The winds sailors used to move them along their trade routes are called trade winds.

***OM* FANUS**: That's a good thing to know. I was afraid they were trying to trade the wind, in which case I wanted to know what they were going to ask for it! (*a few people laugh*)

KAREN: What I find interesting is the division of responsibility vis-à-vis trade items. The siblings who leave are responsible for items that represent manufactured things, cloth and tools and such. It is the sibling left behind who is given responsibility for the resources of the earth.

GRANDPA YUNUS: It is like a division of authority. We are descendants of the brother who was left behind, so we are the ones responsible for the well-being of the earth – the rocks, the forests, the water.

SEFNAT: *Ibu*, you were asking about place names. I assume you know that the word *timur* is a Javanese word. It means in the direction the sun rises.

KAREN: I've always just known it to mean east; same difference, really. What I've never been sure about is the relationship between *ti* ***mur***, as in east, and Ti **mor**, as in the name of this island. I've never been sure if the island was named to mean "east." If so, then obviously someone from the west and familiar with Javanese named this island. I read somewhere, I think in a book by this Timorese priest…what was his name? Something like Nenobaes, but that wasn't it. Maybe Neon … Neon something. Anyway, he speculates the name Timor comes from the people who arrived here from Malacca.

PAPA TIUS: Well, whoever came up with that name, it was for themselves. If you listen carefully to our history, as we recite it in our own tongue, this island is never called Timor, only *pah* which means land, or sometimes *pah meto* which means dry land.

KAREN: That'd be one reason to argue for the presence of *masyarakat adat* when traders arrived here from wherever – Cina, India, Portugal, the Netherlands. Hmm. This makes me wonder more about the introduction of Oematan into the story. Yohanis, earlier you suggested that when Oematan is mentioned, perhaps the narrative shifts to a later point in history, sometime after the early explorers had landed. But it may be that the shift is not so much a shift in time as it is a shift in perspective. The sections about Oematan may have come from an earlier time period. Maybe the main shift is that with the separation of the siblings and the introduction of Oematan, the narrative shifts away from a story about sailors who landed and settled here to the story of people who were already here when those sailors arrived.

YOHANIS: Well, it might be both a shift in time and a shift regarding who's taking center stage, so to speak. If there *were* already people here when the siblings first arrived on this island, the narrative as we have it now doesn't give us many clues about encounters between the two groups. Unless... maybe the yellow-skinned sibling didn't arrive with the other two but was already here.

KAREN: Well, we could speculate *ad nauseum*. I think it's safe to say that the oral recitation gives us clues to the past, it doesn't define the past. Let's see, there were a couple other places I was curious about. (*Using her index finger to scroll down the pages of her notebook.*) Oh yeah. Here's one. *Nun Henum Oekus*. They leave *from Balaka Hindia* Continent and arrive at *Nun Henum Oekus*. *Oekus* means the northern port of

Oecussi in Ambenu, right? (*Several people respond simultaneously*) Yes/that's right/uh-huh.

[A large screen suspended upstage, so far unseen, comes to life with a slide projected on to it that shows a map of Timor island, complete with the boundary between West Timor and Timor Lorosae. Ambenu, an enclave of Timor Lorosae in north central Timor with Oecussi on its coast, is clearly marked.]

SEFNAT: You know, I heard that some of the East Timorese refugees who are afraid to return to Timor Lorosae want Ambeno to become a part of Indonesia.

***OM* TOMAS**: What are they afraid of?

***OM* FANUS**: They're afraid there may be fighting again like there was after the referendum in 1999.

KAREN: I don't think that's the problem. They may say that's what they're afraid of, but the real fear, I think, is that they'll have to face retaliation for all the damage they created after the referendum – the killing, the burning, the looting they did. They want guarantees of immunity, but that's not the kind of reconciliation Timor Lorosae can offer. As for hoping Ambeno will become a part of Indonesia, they should forget about it.

PAPA TIUS: If it became part of Indonesia, that'd sure make it easier for me to visit Ambenu some day. We have family there I've never met.

KAREN: Then start saving your money to pay for a passport and visa. Timor Lorosae is not going to hand over Ambenu to Indonesia. The Portuguese had their first settlement in Ambenu in the mid-17th century at Lifao. And Ambenu remained under Portuguese rule, even after the Dutch were defeated and Indonesia became a nation. Indonesia didn't lay claim to Ambenu and East Timor until it annexed them in 1975. Both territories fought

for independence from Indonesia, and both celebrated that independence in May 2002. They have the same history, and a few disgruntled refugees making a fuss about it aren't going to separate the two regions now. (*The screen upstage is turned off.*)

PAPA LIUS: How about getting back to the recitation?

KAREN: Just one more quick question, if I may. (*Not waiting for a response*) What's the deal with the poison bullets? There was something about a cave and poisonous bullets… (*looking through her notebook*).

YOHANIS: It was *Gua Plas Lili*, they collected poisonous bullets at *Gua Plas Lili*, but that's all I know. Do you know anything more about the bullets, Papa Lius? (*Papa Lius shakes his head*) Grandpa Yunus? (*Grandpa Yunus shrugs.*) Anyone?

SEFNAT: (*shaking his head)* Not a clue. But you know what? It doesn't matter. If you'll excuse me for saying so, *ibu*, I think you're going a little overboard trying to make sense of everything. This is *not* a scientific treatise, it's a travelers' tale, part of our ancestral legacy. That doesn't mean it isn't history.

PAPA TIUS: That's right, *ibu*. Just consider how the story begins with "in the beginning, the three largest tribes on earth…" "In the beginning" – that's like Genesis, and I've never heard anyone dispute the Bible for not being history. It is, just like this story of ours is history; it's our history.

KAREN (*thoughtfully*): Yes…you're right. In some ways it is similar to the Old Testament narratives that deal with the identity of the Israelite community.

SEFNAT: The beauty of the tale does not lie in chronological coherency or having explanations for everything. I think you'll understand that better after you listen to all of it.

KAREN: Fair enough. Let's continue.

YERI: Give me just a second, I need to change the batteries already.

KAREN (*stretching*): OK. I think I'll step outside for some fresh air. Excuse me, please. (*Karen leaves the room. Lights out.*)

Scene II: Women and Men in Liminal Space

[Lights come up center stage to illuminate Karen, Yohanis, and Sefnat sitting on high stools. A fourth stool remains empty. Stage left, upstage, and stage right remain dark. Karen is thumbing through her notebook; Sefnat and Yohanis are talking to each other.]

KAREN: It's really quite some history. Sure triggers a lot of thoughts for me. But I get frustrated because there are so many different places I don't know, it can be hard to follow sometimes.

SEFNAT: That's right, *ibu*. Hanis and I understand. It can get to be pretty overwhelming. It helps if you can try and listen differently somehow. Don't try so hard to make logical sense out of everything. (*As Sefnat is speaking, Ella walks into the light from the dark behind them and takes the fourth stool.*)

KAREN (*not surprised*): Hey there, Ella. Boy, am I ever glad to see you. (*turning towards Ella with her back to Sefnat and Yohanis*) Get this, will you? I went all the way back to Lelobatan (*raises her hand towards stage left*) for a thicker description of Naususu, and what do I get? Something that sounds like racist Christian rhetoric. I really can't believe it.

ELLA: Really? Well, I suspect the colonial legacy in Timor runs deep, but you need to ask yourself if this is a battle you want to fight right now, even if it's only a battle with yourself. You just said you were after the story of Naususu.

KAREN: I am, but I need to figure out what to do with those parts of the story that interrupt my concentration.

ELLA: Interruptions can be good.

KAREN: Well yeah, maybe, if they move the other way ideologically – you know, things that interrupt racist narratives.

ELLA: That kind of interruption may also be in their narrative. Maybe you just need to keep listening.

KAREN: You're probably right. I wish I could just ignore the red flags that pop up when they talk about yellow and black and white skins, but I can't, not easily at any rate because this is also part of their story. At least it's part of this version of their story. I've lost track of how many versions there are. Probably as many versions as there are families.

ELLA: So how is it that this one got privileged?

KAREN: I chose it. It's one I wanted to record, in part because I know Papa Lius and some of his family. Anyway, I figure this account's as good as the next… But then I didn't know the parts about skin color when I chose it. Jees.

ELLA: It's possible that what you hear is not reproduction of racist discourse, but something else. (*At this point, Sefnat and Yohanis, who have been politely listening, begin to whisper to each other, using a lot of hand gestures*) Or maybe it's more about something else than it is about racism. If you can't let it go, sit with it for awhile.

KAREN: OK, interpretation. (*A moment of pondering.*) What do you think of this?

ELLA: That was hardly sitting with it for awhile.

KAREN: I know, I know. But something is starting to come together for me. Maybe this piece of their story doesn't *only* perpetuate constructions of race from the past. Maybe it *also* points to an early effort by Timorese to insert themselves into a universal history they were fed. Instead of rejecting the European Christian story about how the world got populated, they narrate themselves into it, keep doing so, in fact, even if the story no longer has much play these days.

ELLA: Oh I think it plays alright. Racism infuses plenty of popular culture. For a very long time Hollywood's representations of otherness have been nothing if not racist. Consider the Carmen Miranda films of the 1940s, cowboy movies of the 50s, action films set in Africa or Egypt. Look at *Apocalypse Now*; *Raiders of the Lost Ark; Lara Croft, Tomb Raider*. The imperial imaginary doesn't die, it just keeps reinventing itself.

SEFNAT (*nodding emphatically to Yohanis he turns to face Karen's back and clears his throat*): Excuse me, *Ibu* Karen (*tapping Karen on the shoulder, Karen turns briefly to Sefnat*). I don't really follow all you're saying, but it sounds like you don't like the part about differences of skin color among our ancestors. But I think you're leaving something out. Have you forgotten the part about the three siblings not being divorced from each other?

KAREN: Good point, Sef. (*back to Ella*) Maybe what should be emphasized here is the bit about the one ancestral womb. How does this sound? In an effort to identify themselves with the "outsider," the Timorese narrate themselves into a Christian meta-narrative based on imported European constructs of race. They appropriate that history for themselves while at the same time stressing the sameness of origins. Hmm. By

narrating themselves into an otherwise Eurocentric history and by shifting the emphasis from difference to commonality...well, maybe there's a little resistance going on here.

ELLA: I'm not so sure about that. Racism as resistance?

KAREN: Not racism; appropriation and unity.

ELLA: I don't know; you seem to have resistance on the mind.

KAREN: You're right there. But yeah, this still needs some work. Maybe Walter Mignolo would be interested. I hear he's into counter-hegemonic narratives that aren't out to manage the planet – ones that go against colonial projects. I wonder what he'd have to say about subalterns who don't contest Eurocentric history, just narrate themselves into it.

ELLA: Maybe he'd say historical assimilation.

KAREN: Possibly. But assimilation suggests identity surrendered. I'm arguing the Timorese claim agency through appropriation. They don't assimilate to the European narrative so much as appropriate it into their own history. The universal goes local. (*as if coming out of a reverie*) Oh gee, I'm sorry (*turning towards Sefnat and Yohanis*). Ella and I have been yakking away and I haven't even introduced you yet. Ella, meet Sefnat and Yohanis. They've been helping me with commentaries on the oral histories I've been collecting in the village. Sefnat, Yohanis, this is Ella. She's from the US. She teaches in a university there. (*They all shake hands.*)

YOHANIS: What is it you teach?

ELLA: Cultural studies, women's studies. I critique the universalization of Eurocentric values from a gender perspective.

YOHANIS (*nodding*): I see.

SEFNAT: (*engaging in a brief side conversation with Yohanis, Sefnat shrugs his shoulders)*: I don't see, but then I've always been more honest than you.

YOHANIS: And I've always been more polite, which is a polite way of saying more diplomatic.

SEFNAT: It's just that the way these academics talk is so...so...

YOHANIS: Obscure?

SEFNAT: That's it. When they get going there's not much room for anyone else to get a word in edgewise because everybody else is lost. I suppose they can't help the way they talk, but I, for one, am not going to pretend I understand when I don't. Just so long as she's not an investor. I don't think she is. Do you think she is? (*Pause.*) Actually, she could be. I mean think about it. What better front than being a woman university professor?

YOHANIS: Yeah, that or being a woman missionary. To be honest I still have suspicions about *Ibu* Karen. I know Papa Tius and Mama Maria have real close relations with her and her family...and I want to trust Papa Tius. But...well...I hate to say it, but it's always possible Papa Tius could be getting a kickback. *Ka, ka, ka.* I just don't know what to think. (*Yohanis and Sefnat shake their heads and sigh*)

SEFNAT: Well, these days one can't be too careful. I say let's go ahead and help out *Ibu* Karen; we've already gone this far. But it wouldn't hurt to keep our eyes and ears open and report anything suspicious to Papa Lius and the others.

[Lights dim on center stage and simultaneously come up on stage left.]

YERI: OK. Let's see, where were we? The *amaf-amaf* and *meo-meo* had been introduced... (*He inserts the earbugs, presses rewind and then the play button on the*

recorder several times. He finally finds the point he's looking for, speaking along with what he hears) ...together with several clans led by Oematan they left and went to a place named *skuku un na mnela un* (*puts the recorder on pause*). You ready to continue, Papa Lius? (*Papa Lius nods, just as Sefnat, Yohanis, and Karen walk in.)* Hang on just a minute. (*to the returnees*) Welcome back, we were just getting started. (*The three quickly take their seats, Yeri sets the mike in place, switches off the pause button, gives a signal to Papa Lius to continue, and leans back in his chair.*)

PAPA LIUS: So the *amaf-amaf*, *meo-meo*, and several clans led by Oematan moved and settled in several places until they arrived and settled in a place called *tuif nuni un, hai muni un* where they felt difficulty and sadness. It is also called *meno'* or the place that is bitter because their only food was pomegranates and tamarind fruits. They had no means to cook so they had to drink uncooked water and eat uncooked food. And while at the place where they felt bitterness they gave birth to four girls and four boys. And they remained in that place to raise the eight children.

PAPA TIUS (*leans over to whisper to Yeri*): If you want to know how this happened...well, we don't like to talk about it in front of the children, but there was some incest going on. But you don't need to record that.

PAPA LIUS (*continuing*): And after the eight children had grown, those in authority and the movers of the people, together with the tribes of Timor, they left from the place called *meno'* or bitter and came to a place they called *Gunung Tem* or Arrival Mountain. And it was from this mountain that the people's leader called Oematan began his activities. And among these activities an event occurred. Oematan took his water and poured it into a hole on the face of the earth and the water became alive at that place.

And after the water lived, Oematan, whose name means eye or source of the water, together with those who moved the people, and those who managed the people, together with all the tribes of Timor gave that place the name *tesi'* which means poured. And this water lives until now and is called *tesi'* until now so it is known that at this place a miracle occurred where water poured into a hole on the face of the earth became a living spring that exists until now. And the clan that guards this living spring is Safatu and this clan also exists until now.

And after this, Oematan led all the tribes with all of the people's movers, and they walked some more to a place named *Mnela Ha Hae*. And because the trip was so long they became very tired, so they stayed awhile at the meadow that was later called *Mnela Ha Hae*, which means a meadow full of tiredness. And after they arrived there they stayed awhile and had various activities there.

And while at the place called *Mnela Ha Hae*, or the field of grass where they felt tired, they saw a miracle that happened there. It was a strange miracle, but real, because there was a baby who was crying in a clump of candle bamboo, something that was certainly strange, but true, and there is evidence until now. And the leader of the tribes of Timor land, who moved for the first time to see this miracle, to see this baby crying in the clump of candle bamboo, was the older sibling of King Oematan, namely King Kono. But when the older brother, King Kono, arrived at the clump of candle bamboo where the crying baby was, he walked by it. And he returned without success in finding or seeing the baby. So it was here that King Kono failed.

Then King Oematan, as the mover of the tribes, moved to see the baby who was crying in a clump of candle bamboo. And on his own, King Oematan arose and when he

arrived, Oematan saw the clump of candle bamboo that held a small baby with its umbilical cord wrapped around a stalk of one of the candle bamboo trees. So Oematan released the umbilical cord and held the baby and carried the baby to show to his older brother, King Kono, together with all the tribes and movers and managers of the people who were in the meadow.

And after Oematan showed the baby, then all the tribes, together with King Kono, and all the *amaf-amaf* and all the *meo-meo*, they say that they all *haim fenam taoba mataf*, which simply means they arose and witnessed only with their eyes. And after they arose to witness with their eyes, they gathered together again with the baby at the place named *Mnela Ha Hae*. And then they began to form beds to hold water where they could plant rice because they had an idea to plant rice by using the water held in the beds. They began to plant and produce rice at that place, and the rice produced was so great that there was an excess of rice. There was so much rice that it began to spoil.

After they obtained overflowing amounts of food in the place named *Mnela Ha Hae* or Tired Field, they delegated their womb sister who was named Nau Oematan to continue the journey to see the breadth and narrowness of the land of Timor, especially in Mollo. And after their womb sister Nau Oematan saw the breadth and narrowness of Mollo and saw that it was a safe and calm territory in the land of Timor, she returned to inform King Oematan together with all the tribes of Timor that the land was safe and calm.

After the womb sister Nau Oematan, together with King Oematan and all the tribes of Timor arrived together in Mollo they headed for Mount Mutis (*the upstage screen is lit again with a slide showing Mount Mutis*) and they appointed themselves as

leaders over the three mountains known as Mutis Mountain, Mollo Mountain, and Bi Kekneno Mountain, and also over a large rock called Naususu Rock. (*A slide showing Anjaf-Nausus heavily forested prior to the mining is projected on the screen as Papa Lius continues his narrative.*) And water overflowed from these three mountains and one large rock, and there was water that would flow throughout the land of Timor.

And they settled on Mutis Mountain and began to build a *lopo* with eight posts (*slide of a lopo is projected*) because those who became kaisers at that place were eight. And finally from that place they came to a place called *Hal In* in the sense of *Hal Kolo, Hal Manu* that means a ritual ceremony for the birds and chickens. This means the people were given authority to preserve the wildlife in that place called *Hal In*.

Then Nau Oematan came and stayed beneath Rock Naususu and there she found things for cooking food at the rock. (*Another pre-mining slide of Anjaf-Naususu is projected.*) And the others who were with her, they found a cave in the shape of a house and in the cave was a rock in the shape of a warrior. They lived there with all their belongings and all their weapons made of stone. And there was later found a rock in the shape of a guard there, as well as a gong, and other things. This means that Nau once lived there and that the role of that rock is to protect. And after they stayed there in safety and calmness, together they climbed up Mount Mollo because that was the place of the eight kaisers.

They convened together on top of Mount Mollo to divide the territory. (*Slide of Mount Mollo is projected.*) And after they had reached an agreement, they began to divide the territory among all the tribes. And King Kono who is called *Tot tun Besin, an bai kono*, is the one who divided the territory among all the tribes. And after they divided

the territory according to their agreement, they began to descend the mountain in single file to a place at the foot of Mount Mollo that is called *En Bonet*.

And they continued walking single file to a place named *Bati*. And after they arrived at *Bati*, there they sat together to hold another meeting for them to excuse themselves one from the other, and each authority figure along with each tribe headed for the territory that had been divided for them in accordance with the agreement on the top of Mount Mollo. And they brought their meeting to a close at the place named *Netpala*, in the sense that all matters they had discussed were concluded and the meeting was no further prolonged.

And the older sibling, King Kono, went to the place named Miomafo Mountain and he took a chair with him to that place and by taking a chair to that place it carried the meaning that every matter discussed had obtained a seat because all the territory had been divided. And after they separated, King Oematan was given the place in Mollo (*several slides of Anjaf-Naususu from pre-mining period are projected as Papa Lius narrates*), namely the center of Timor land, because in Mollo were springs of water from Mutis Mountain and Bi Kekneno Mountain, and Mollo Mountain, including Naususu Rock that gives water that flows to all corners of this land of Timor. So Oematan was entrusted with occupying the land of Timor, especially in Mollo (*several slides of Anjaf-Naususu from post-mining period are projected*), to defend and guard the environment so that Mount Mutis, Mount Bi Kekneno, Mount Mollo and Rock Naususu would continue to produce water to all the ends of Timor land. He is to preserve this region for the tribes that have settled in all the corners of this Timor land so they will not run out of drinking water and can take water, like milk from a mother, for the needs of life for all the tribes.

(*Yeri leans forward to hit the pause button on the tape recorder at which time everyone in the room freezes.*)

[Lights go out stage left and come up full on center stage where Ella, Karen, Sefnat, and Yohanis are again seated on the high stools.]

ELLA: like milk from a mother…very fertile imagery there, so to speak.

KAREN: Some story, huh? I'm glad Yeri recorded it. (*To Sefnat and Yohanis*) I'm curious, what do you two think of the narrative?

SEFNAT: I draw two conclusions from it. The first is that King Oematan was a natural king; he was not elected by anyone and not dethroned by anyone.

YOHANIS: You know, this is reflected in his name and the name of his territory. Just look at all the other tribes living on the island of Timor – Amfoan, Ambenu, Amanatun, Amanuban, Amarasi…they all include *amaf* as part of their name. But not Oematan. There is no Am Oematan or Am Mollo. That's because Oematan is the one *atoin mone,* the womb brother in the male line of natural kings. He and the territory he rules stand apart.

SEFNAT: The second conclusion I draw is that King Oematan was the creator of place names and the one to discover events. Each place mentioned in the narrative was actually nothing noteworthy, but because Oematan was there, an event occurred that he himself discovered, and he himself gave a name to each place. Naususu Rock is such a place. It was just an ordinary rock, but when King Oematan's sister Nau came along, she changed that rock to become a rock named Nau.

ELLA: So don't you think she should get the credit instead of King Oematan? (*Sefnat looks at Yohanis, a bit bewildered.*)

YOHANIS: Umm, they were a family. When we say that something became noteworthy because Oematan passed that way, we mean King Oematan with all his people, including Nau. (*Ella, rolling her eyes, gives Karen a knowing look of vexation, Karen responds by slightly raising her eyebrows and chin.*)

KAREN (*to Sefnat and Yohanis*): Back at the house before the recitation began, I heard someone say something like, "Drink at Mollo, drink at Naususu." Does that expression carry a special meaning?

SEFNAT: Naususu is not the only rock that produces water. There are also springs at the other mountains mentioned in the narrative and they provide water to all of Timor. But of all the places our ancestors observed, they chose to live at Naususu.

YOHANIS: According to the recitation, God is the one who put the springs at Naususu, but Nau is the one who first discovered them there. There is other water mentioned as *kaun leu oe mat*. That is the water Oematan planted on top of Mollo Mountain.

SEFNAT: The water planted by Oematan on top of Mount Mollo is still there along with a candle bamboo, just one tree. It grows at the water there and if that bamboo dies then another tree will grow, but just one; there can't be more than one tree. And the water planted there comes out like... excuse me, but the water comes out like water coming out of a cow that is urinating. There is a great amount and it is the source that flows to become one large river. And we can see this until today.

ELLA: I'm fascinated by the comparison of water to a mother's milk at the end of the narrative. What's that about?

KAREN: *Susu* means milk. The name of the rock, Naususu, literally means Nau's milk.

SEFNAT: The part about *susu* means we are talking about water. When Nau saw the water that comes out of this rock she thought it was like milk. Nau and Susu together mean a mother who is needed by the people of this island of Timor; they need to drink from this rock.

KCN: On Java, they also call the little springs that trickle out from the sides of mountains and cliffs *air susu*, milk water, like the first liquid from the breast of a nursing mother. This water is pure and they drink it be cupping banana leaves at the spot where it drips out.

ELLA: You know, the more I think about it, the more it sounds like Naususu Rock and Mount Mollo are a gendered pair. Naususu is a mother who gives milk, Mollo is a man who gives water as if he were urinating, or maybe it is as if he were releasing sperm.

KAREN: And don't forget, the narrative talks about Naususu as the place they cooked and lived whereas Mollo is the place men are said to have gathered to hold deliberations for dividing up territory. This parallels Timorese gendered divisions of space – the enclosed beehive-shaped *ume kbubu* where the family sleeps and the food is stored and cooked is identified as the woman's dwelling. And the inside is definitely womb-like – very dark and close. It is anathema to let the embers inside an *ume kbubu* die completely so the inside is also always warm. The open-sided *lopo* is where visitors are received and men discuss public matters. Although women may sit there, conceptually the *lopo* is understood as the men's dwelling.

SEFNAT: There's no doubt Naususu is a woman. In Amanuban, Amarasi, Amfoang, Ambenu, the people there don't call this rock Naususu, but *fatu skau li ana*, the mother holding her child – Naususu is the mother and Anjaf the child.

YOHANIS: Naususu is the kitchen – the round house and the cultural house. Only Oematan's people, not outsiders, may enter this space of intimacy. I remember Papa Tius once telling me that when *Om* Sem was still alive

ELLA: *Om* Sem?

YOHANIS: Our last king, Sem Oematan.

ELLA: That's right, I forgot. Please, continue.

YOHANIS: When *Om* Sem was still alive, and before Mr. Kolo at the Cultural Bureau in Kapan retired, these two made an inventory of items found at Naususu – things like pottery jugs, machetes, mortars for pounding rice, gongs, all signs that humans once lived there. The narrative talks about it as *pete pam buat* which means all the tribes of Timor kept their wealth at Naususu.

SEFNAT: When the mining began, all those things disappeared. We've tried to take the matter to court, but the NGO helping us didn't follow through, so until now there's been no response to this theft. All the *amaf-amaf* of Timor should demand these items be returned, however, because the people of Mollo were the ones designated to guard these mountains. We should take some kind of action so it won't be for nothing that this place is called *tilun bi naub, tilun bi lesi*, the place of the Woman Nau, the place of the Woman Lesi.

KAREN: I'm curious, because this rock is a source of water did people go there to pray for rain?

YOHANIS: Not just rain, they also prayed for the sun's warmth, an end to excessive rain, at that rock because that was the place they were protected. All the tribes and all the

amaf-amaf and all the *meo-meo*, together with King Oematan and King Kono, asked for rain and asked for heat at Naususu Rock.

KAREN: So it was a ritual site for everyone, not just Oematan himself.

SEFNAT: At the time when the tribes of Timor were still together, they all prayed at Rock Naususu. Traditional oaths were raised up by all the *amaf-amaf* on the island of Timor, and also by King Oematan and King Kono. They prayed that this rock and these three mountains – Mount Mutis, Mount Bi Kekneno, Mount Mollo, and including the fourth mountain of Miomafo – would be well guarded and not be ruined. Their environments must be preserved so that water would continue to spring from them. They also agreed that King Oematan and his tribe must stay in this place to guard the forest animals and the places where there are native species. It was the hope of the *amaf-amaf* that King Oematan would guard Naususu Marble Mountain and the other four mountains so they would not be disturbed because they produce water that gives life to all the tribes on this island of Timor. At Naususu alone 12 springs feed the Bisnaen River that provides water from here all the way to Bena on the south coast.

YOHANIS: There's an old expression about King Oematan – his feet are in the sea, his head is in the ocean – it means his authority over the land and its resources stretches from the north to the south coasts of Timor. This is what makes the people of Mollo unique. When the tribes spread out to inhabit all the land of Timor, we were left behind to protect these mountains and their headwaters, the source of Timor's milk.

KAREN: It's pretty clear environmental protection is central to your historical identity. I'd imagine that raises the stakes for villagers when the government introduces projects that aren't exactly environment friendly, like the mining of Anjaf-Naususu.

YOHANIS: The elders opposed to the mining say that all those who do not oppose the mining have forsaken their customs, their identity, and should be cursed. They are particularly upset with Om Sem's son, Ben, who turned over the area for mining after Om Sem died.

SEFNAT: The elders say if there are parties who damage Naususu it means they erase the name of King Oematan's sister –

YOHANIS (*interjecting*): humiliate the sister –

SEFNAT: They humiliate her, and that includes murdering King Oematan's sister –

YOHANIS (*again interjecting*): make her naked –

SEFNAT: Yes, make her naked because the word Naususu means, well…it implies the Breast of Timor.

YOHANIS: If the mother is cut and her milk thrown away then her children will no longer live.

ELLA (*to Karen*): Talk about gendered space in Timor…

KAREN (*to Ella*): Talk about violence against gendered space in Timor. You know, there's an Australian ethnographer named McWilliam who writes about how Timorese origin journeys use a narrative device that merges person with place. It seems to me the narrative we've just heard points to the implications of this for political as well as cultural identity. The name of King Oematan's sister is merged with that of a rock identified as a settlement site, a center of domesticity and social reproduction. From what I've observed so far, the resistance of those who oppose the mining of Naususu is not politically motivated, at least not primarily so. Rather their opposition relates to this enduring legacy that merges cultural identity to particular places. Local opponents of the mining

understand their resistance as a cultural act – an act to protest the erasure of their cultural identity by protecting the mother who nurses them. However, it is to the state's advantage if all open resistance can be identified as political and therefore a threat to state sovereignty. Despite the fact the Indonesian Communist Party was annihilated in the mid-60s, government officials invoke its name, even if just for the purposes of name-calling, in order to situate resistance to the mining as being primarily political. I'm still working on the articulation of this, but I see the merging of person and place within this particular narrative to provoke the merging of cultural with political constructs outside the narrative.

ELLA: The conflation of damage to the rock with humiliation, even murder, of Oematan's metaphorical sister seems intended to incite an incendiary reaction for political as well as cultural reasons. The varied functions of this metaphor of implied rape become clearer when it is set within a discursive cycle. On the one hand, the metaphor begs reaction, on the other it is itself a reaction to a trope of empire that surrounds the mining of Naususu. This trope, in which the maternity of Naususu is denied in favor of an unspoiled "virgin" presumably available for exploitation – a wilderness territory waiting to be subdued and made productive – justifies the state's appropriation and mining of this land.

KAREN: Absolutely. In Indonesia the favorite euphemism for this trope is the discourse of development.

ELLA: Trope of empire, development discourse... whatever its guise, the interpretation I hear of this narrative situates the mining of Naususu as internal colonization.

KAREN: Yeah, a professor friend of mine, Sangeeta Kamat, writes a little about internal colonization in her new book, *Development Hegemony*. You should check it out, it's really good. I've got a copy if you want to borrow it. Hang on! This bit about internal colonization reminds me... Would you believe that about a month ago someone had the gall to hoist a flag on the peak of Naususu? I saw it when I walked by a few weeks ago to catch a bus to Kupang. I wanted to try to get a photo, or find someone to hike up and check it out, but when I returned a week later it had disappeared.

SEFNAT: It's possible some Boy Scouts hiked up there and left a flag behind as a sign of their conquest...

KAREN: Or, maybe it was a company flag, or a surveyor's flag. It almost surely was NOT planted by anyone locally. I think what disturbed me most was the timing. Had I seen a flag up there only a few months ago, before the mining began, I doubt I would have thought twice about it. But to see a flag up there only a few weeks after the mining began...well, it just reinforced this feeling that Anjaf-Naususu had become colonized territory. *(to Sefnat and Yohanis)* I hope you don't mind. I have a few more questions. I'm still curious about the historical role played by Naususu. What about wars among tribes? Did Naususu ever play a role in wars?

SEFNAT: It's like this, *ibu*. Since the word Naususu suggests breast, it also carries the meaning to embrace. No doubt the early kings had disagreements, but once they arrived in Mollo, Nau embraced and improved their relations. This means Naususu Rock is the place that serves as the apex for people to be at peace, to make peace with each other.

YOHANIS: I won't say there were never wars on Timor, there were, but never over the marble of Naususu rock. I think one of the first wars related to control of the sandalwood

trade. The second was because the womb sisters of King Oematan and King Kono shifted territorial boundaries that had been set by Kono Oematan. But there was never a war to seize Naususu Rock because it is an inheritance from King Oematan and King Kono together with all the tribes of the land of Timor. It is an heirloom, joint property, which is why there cannot be a war by anyone to seize it.

SEFNAT: It's public property and can't be treated as anyone's particular rock. When people pray there, no one prays to take strength from it as his or her personal possession. That's why if anyone ruins it, then all the tribes of the land of Timor together with the king are called to rise up and move to defend it, to guard and preserve its peacefulness.

YOHANIS: When talking about Nau it helps to know there were two women in our history known as Nau. The first Nau lived at the rock; that was her kitchen. It was only later after the king and his people moved to Netpala that a second Nau is mentioned. This second Nau, Nau Au Monit, used Naususu as a place to protect livestock. There was a pen there. So once the Oematans began living at Netpala they secured their livestock at Naususu.

KAREN: Clearly the uses of the rock have changed over time. I remember before Om Sem died he oversaw the building of four large *lopos* and a race track for horses in that flat field on the north side of Naususu. Are there any cultural reasons he chose that location for a race track?

SEFNAT: Well, it's true the regency government at the time was hoping to promote tourism in this area, so the race track was encouraged by the government. Om Sem chose the location at the foot of Naususu because it is an historical site. He had four *lopos* built

around the edges of the track to symbolize there were originally four *amaf* to prop up the strength of the Mollo kingdom.

YOHANIS: That's part of it, but another reason for putting the track there is so that the horses' strength could be tested by history. If you were a true, authentic descendant of Naususu who had never trespassed any customary laws, your horse would win. They wanted to use history to test the horses in competition.

KAREN: Hmm. I wonder what Nau would have to say about that.

ELLA: Consider the shifts in use of Naususu that we know about. It was an original settlement site, a livestock pen, the site of a race track. These have different gender associations – livestock and horse-racing are customarily male domains.

KAREN: But these changes in function don't seem to be matched by changes in the meaning of the rock. Rather the different functions expand the meaning of the rock by contributing layers to it. At a moment of resistance, however, it is the earliest layer of meaning, the meaning that endures through the rock's name, namely a mother who gives milk that is foregrounded. To say a cattle pen has been stripped naked just doesn't carry the same punch as saying your mother has been.

SEFNAT: You know, I hate to break this up, but I really should be going. It'll be dark soon and I promised my father I'd help look for some of his cattle he hasn't seen for a few days. Can we accompany you home?

KAREN (*glancing at Ella who shakes her head*): I don't think we're ready just yet. We'll be fine. Please, go ahead.

YOHANIS: Well, if we may… I left my machete in my garden down the hill at Pao Kenat. I'd better retrieve that before I head home. You're sure you don't mind being here alone?

ELLA: No, really, we'll be fine.

KAREN: Thanks again for everything. And don't be surprised if I show up in about another month or so. I'd like to try hiking Mount Mollo before the rainy season begins.

SEFNAT: Good. We'll see you then. Take it easy. (*Sefnat and Yohanis take their leave by saying good-bye and shaking hands with Ella and Karen and move towards the set on stage left.*)

KCN: So, what did you think?

ELLA: Well, I think it would be worth trying to track down information about that flag you saw. And there may be some value in laying out the history of land use in the immediate vicinity around Naususu, maybe summarize it on a timeline or something. You know this story would actually make a great play.

KCN: Yeah, it would, but I'd need to shorten it somehow.

ELLA: So how's the dissertation coming?

KCN: Don't ask. No…you can ask. I'm only about halfway done, but I'm struggling with how to show that the farmers' resistance to the mining is also resistance to modernity. There's all this post-structural critique of modernity, just using the word is problematic – it's too universal or too reified or too something.

ELLA: Maybe it'd help to think more exactly about what you mean by modernity and then say that instead of modernity.

KCN: Well, a lot of the time I mean the social and political institutions of Indonesia as a "modern" nation created in 1945. I'll go back and see if I can be more specific whenever I refer to modernity. Say, I really should head back and see how Yeri's doing, but let's stay in touch, OK?

ELLA: I'm pretty sure I have your email address. Do you have mine.

KCN: Last I checked. So, take it easy, OK?

ELLA: You too.

[The two women hug each other as lights fade out.]

Scene III: Oematan's Front Room

The front room of the Oematan home in Lelobatan hamlet, West Timor.

[Lights come up stage left as Yeri is putting away the recording equipment. Two young women bring in trays filled with small glasses of tea and a chipped white plate piled high with peanuts. They carefully set the drinks and plate on the table before the guests and then retreat to a back room.]

YERI *(putting away the recording equipment)*: Well, I got it all recorded and learned some things I didn't know before.

KAREN: Yes, it was a very complete recitation, Papa Lius. Thank you for taking time to do this.

PAPA LIUS: Yes, it is good to do this now and again. Please, help yourself to the refreshments. (*Everyone picks up a glass and sips some tea.*)

KAREN: Papa Lius, how did you get the gift of recitation?

PAPA LIUS: Well, when I was a teen, my Big Father, Papa Loka, he scraped my tongue with a bamboo comb and said a prayer to ordain me to have the gift.

GRANDPA YUNUS (*chuckling*): That Papa Loka was a character. When he wanted the rain to stop he would take his granddaughter's underwear and tie it at the top of his round house.

OM **TOMAS**: Yes, he was quite a guy. He certainly knew how to ride a horse. He was one of the fastest riders around here.

YERI (*taking a handful of peanuts*): I remember my father used to tell me stories when I was just a little kid about what a great jockey Grandpa Loka was. He must have been a pretty small guy.

GRANDPA YUNUS: Yes, he was, but he had a very big heart.

KAREN: I wish I had known him.

PAPA TIUS: Well, if you'll excuse me everyone, I need to be going. There's to be a family meeting to discuss a long-time family feud between Orpa and Ishak's families. That needs to get settled before they can get married, but it'd be best if they got married. I'm not sure how much longer Orpa and her baby will be able to stay with us. Anyway, if you want to wish luck to someone, wish it to me. Yeri, *Ibu* Karen, we can go as far as the creek together if you're ready.

KAREN: Sure, I'm ready. I brought a flashlight, but it'd be good to get going since there's no moon tonight. What about you, Yeri? Shall we go?

YERI: OK (*checks on recording equipment that he's put in a bag*).

PAPA TIUS (*standing up; Karen and Yeri follow suit*): If you'll excuse us, please. Good evening. See you in church on Sunday if not before.

YERI (*bowing his head to everyone*): Good night.

***OM* FANUS**: Yeri, when you come to church, don't forget to bring my *Si knino* hymnbook your mom borrowed last month. We want to practice a hymn from it at choir practice next week.

YERI: OK.

KAREN: Please excuse us. And thank you again. (*Karen, Yeri, and Papa Tius exit upstage)*

***OM* FANUS**: (*speaking to Grandpa Yunus*). Well, I should go check on the kids at the *Nefo Naek* garden. I asked them to work on the garden hut today, but they may have had trouble finding grass for the roof.

***OM* TOMAS**: The grass is pretty thin all over right now. What were they going to do, carry it from up around *Faut* Monas?

***OM* FANUS**: I'm not sure. That's why I want to check on them. I also want to be sure the horses are OK. Grandpa, Papa Lius, *Om* Tomas. Good night. (*Om Fanus exits upstage.*)

[Lights out.]

Act II: The Kitchen

Scene I: Women in the Kitchen

[Low lights come up downstage right to *Mama Maria's kitchen* to illuminate the inside of a Timorese round house. The corners of this dimly-lit kitchen are marked by four huge posts. At the foot of one of the back posts is a coke can with a low-burning wick sticking out from its top. Forming a perimeter around the outside of the posts are a barely visible wooden rack lined with dishes, a couple of low wooden bed frames covered by flattened bamboo; several large, smoke-blackened woven baskets, one of which has cotton peeking out from under a woven lid, and a wooden table. A couple of small woven baskets and a plastic bag of laundry detergent hang from one of the posts; a rope-woven saddle, a filthy, tattered shirt, and an aluminum flashlight hang from another. To the side is a low doorway, about three feet high, the door closed. In the center of the dirt floor a large, grimy aluminum pot sits on top of three large stones that serve as a tripod. Several logs stick out spoke-like from under the pot. There is a large fire burning under the pot. Embers glow in a small indentation in the floor surrounded by another set of three rocks. The ceiling above the fire is hung with closely packed bundles of dried corn and sorghum, blackened by the smoke drifting up from below. Cockroaches can be heard skuttling among the hanging corn. A large long log reaches obliquely from the floor to some unseen opening at the back edge of the ceiling. Three women are in the middle of the kitchen. Mama Maria and Mama Rut are squatting on logs close to the fire. Both wear dingy checkered sarongs; Mama Rut is wearing a tattered sweater over a T-shirt, Mama Maria an old *kebaya.* Both women have their hair tied in buns and are barefoot. Mama Debora has short hair and wears long pants, a heavy

sweater, and plastic sandals. She squats on a low, short wooden bench. Mama Maria lifts the lid off the pot and stirs the boiled corn and peanuts in it with a long-handled spoon made from a stick of bamboo with a piece of coconut shell tied on one end. Mama Rut, who has only one visible tooth, is pounding up betel nut in its bamboo container, preparing some she can gnaw on. She shoos away a baby pig grunting close to her feet. Mama Debora is speaking passionately to the other two in *Uab Meto*, the indigenous *meto* language.]

KAREN (*opening the door and ducking down to enter the kitchen*): Good evening Mama-Mama.

MAMA MARIA: Good evening, *Ibu*. How's it going?

KAREN (*hangs her shoulder bag and the woven scarf around her neck on a nail on one of the large posts, squats on a stool next to Mama Debora, gives her a hug, then rubs her hands by the fire*): Fine thanks. It's starting to get chilly out there though.

MAMA RUT: It's bound to be another cold night. Do you have enough blankets?

KAREN: Yes, I'll be fine. I wish Mr. John were here, though. No matter how cold it is, he's always like an oven in bed. He just gives off heat.

MAMA DEBORA (*chuckling*): Yeah, that's the way it is with us fat people.

KAREN (*accepts the betel nut offered by Mama Rut*): Mama Bora, when did you get here? I didn't think you were coming until Saturday?

MAMA DEBORA: I came up early. The kids have a break from school for a few days, so while they're available to watch the house I thought I'd take a few days to come see how Grandpa Sarus is doing. Tius and Maria sent down a message with Yeri last week

saying he was real sick, so I was worried. I brought him some canned sardines and palm sugar. I thought that'd cheer him up some.

KAREN: That's nice, you know he'll like it. I suspect Mama Maria and Mama Rut have told you already. He's much better now. It was sort of scary there for awhile, though. He didn't even try to get out of bed for several days, so that tells you how sick he was. But he's back to his old grouchy self. What were you talking about just now? You sure seemed to be excited about something when I came in.

MAMA DEBORA: Oh I met Ben's wife, Erna, by the side of the road in Kapan on my way up here and she was filling my ear about how "no one" is supporting Ben, which as we know is not true. He's bribed support from at least one or two elders in every village around here. But I said to her, I said, "What do you expect? He's forsaken his heritage to satisfy his own greed. He has no respect for his father, God rest his soul, or the people of Mollo." I really let that biddy have it. You should have seen her face. Ha! Acting like she's the king's wife… Just wait and see. Ben's gonna come to regret he ever signed that contract with the investor.

MAMA MARIA: That may be, but Ben and his gang sure have it out for Tius. They blame him for getting people to protest the mining. If you ask me, Tius best not go anywhere on his own these days, especially not close to Naususu. But then, not many people ask me.

MAMA RUT: I heard the other day from Rahel that Ben just had a meeting with the *tua-tua adat* in Fatukoto. After he went home to Ajaobaki, they started talking about attacking your house, Maria.

KAREN: You know, that reminds me. Remember that day I went over to Fatukoto to meet Mr. John and the other professors?

MAMA RUT: I was there too, with Katie and Nia.

KAREN: That's right, you all had gone over a day earlier. Well, I noticed there were a lot of young people playing volleyball in front of the church that day. It seemed an odd time to have so many kids out playing, but I didn't think a whole lot about it at the time. Katie told me later those kids were hanging out waiting to fight if any youth from Lelobatan showed up. I guess they thought a bunch of people from here were going to show up in Fatukoto that day for a big anti-mining demonstration or something and they were prepared to fight. Rumor has it that the *pemuda* Fatukoto have been organized to keep guard around Naususu and attack anyone they see from Lelobatan.

MAMA MARIA: You know, there's not a whole lot I can do about the mining over at Naususu, especially if the people of Fatukoto are just going to sit there and let it happen under their noses, worse yet get their young people all riled up about it. But if any of the mining folk so much as dare step one foot across the creek and disturb our land here, even if it's Ben himself... well just wait and see if I won't be there to stop them!

MAMA DEBORA: If we only had a *raja* who could stop this mess. I remember when Om Sem died over at the *istana*. A dog was at the top of that dead banyan tree between the house and the kitchen. Everyone said it meant the line of kings in North Mollo had ended. The mighty banyan was dead and a throne fit only for a dog. Only a new king could plant a tree to replace it.

MAMA RUT: So why didn't Om Sem call together the *amaf-amaf* before he died so they could appoint his successor? *Ka-ka-ka* (*shakes her head*).

KAREN: Now that's a question I have asked myself many times. (*Pauses.*) Mama Rut, I've been meaning to ask you for some time now, how is it that you get information all the time about what's going on in Fatukoto? Everyone around Lelobatan, especially from the Kune family, is afraid to be seen in Fatukoto. All the influential people over there support the mining and it sounds like they are prepared to keep it that way. Now, this latest news about Ben meeting with the elders in Fatukoto, that comes from your neighbor, Rahel. So how does she get this information?

MAMA RUT: Well, maybe you don't know, but Rahel's older sister, Fia, married a man from Fatukoto. Fia and her family have lived over there for years, but she and Rahel still visit each other often – Rahel isn't afraid to go to Fatukoto to see Fia. And Fia's oldest son, Simon, often comes over here to help Rahel and Hes in their gardens. He was just here helping them plant carrots last week.

KAREN: Well, I think it's great you're keeping open the channel of information from Fatukoto. I don't think you and Rahel are getting enough credit. You know how much Tius and the others want to hear what's happening over there.

[The door opens and a gust of wind causes the flames to waver. Dina, in dark pants with the traditional red and white woven Mollo blanket wrapped around her shoulders, and Helena, in a calf-length skirt and hooded jacket, enter the kitchen. Both are wearing plastic sandals. Dina sets down a large plastic basket filled to the brim with items tied up in black plastic bags on the floor just inside the door. Helena places a similar basket next to Dina's. Both women come close and squat on logs by the fire.]

DINA: What's going on, Mama-mama? It is so cold out there! (*Rubs her hands vigorously.*)

MAMA DEBORA: Look at what the cat drug in.

HELENA: Excuse me?

KAREN: Did you just get here from Kapan?

DINA: Yes, we went together to market today.

MAMA MARIA: Any news?

DINA: I saw El and he was drunk again, really drunk. He could barely stand up. It's shameful. Here Omi is lying next to death's door and El runs off to Kapan to get stinking drunk. It makes me so disgusted.

MAMA RUT: Report it to Tius.

DINA: Yeah, I will.

HELENA: I saw you, Mama Bora, just as you were getting on the van to come up here. I called to you, but you didn't hear me.

MAMA DEBORA: No, I didn't. Where were you? (*Mama Debora takes a piece of the hard outer shell of a betel nut and begins rubbing her teeth with it vigorously.*)

HELENA: By that kiosk on the corner that sells kerosene, that has drums of fuel in front of it. But you know how crowded the streets get on market day. By the time I could make it over to your side of the street, the van was long gone. No matter.

MAMA MARIA: Anything else besides El falling down drunk?

HELENA: Let's see. I bumped into Mama Tapatab from Fatumnasi and she told me that a member of Markus's church council died last night. She was a Sanam, I think, maybe a member of Lot's family. It's really a sad situation; she has three little children, her husband gambles all the time. I was told she was sick for a few days and then she just suddenly died. The funeral's tomorrow.

DINA: I can't go, but maybe I can get Yes to go. We should find one or two others to go over there. And the price of potatoes has sky-rocketed, so I didn't buy any. In fact, all the prices are up. I had to shop, but I could only afford ½ kilo of sugar and that's not going to last Granpa Sarus very long. The *rupiah* just doesn't stretch like it used to. I don't know how we're supposed to keep our kids in school with the cost of staples so high. If the rains are late again this year we'll be forced to eat our seed corn. Once that's gone I guess we'll have to head for the forests in search of *kot laos* or

KAREN: *Kot laos*? Isn't that the poisonous wild bean you have to boil 10 times before it can be eaten?

MAMA MARIA: That's right. A few days ago Serly told me she was going to bring some over for you to eat for breakfast. She probably forgot or got busy or something.

KAREN: So prices are really awful, huh?

HELENA: Mama wanted me to get sugar and cooking oil and kerosene, but I only bought a little oil. Everything just keeps going up faster than the prices we can get for our carrots and garlic. I don't know what we're expected to do...

MAMA DEBORA: We're expected to eat less sugar and more boiled corn.

DINA: Oh, I nearly forgot. Mama Mina, one of Ana's couriers, was at the market today. I think she was trying to recruit some key contacts and was hoping someone from our family would get involved. At least that's what I heard from Sus Emi.

MAMA MARIA: O, you saw Sus Emi. How is she?

HELENA: She's gained some weight, praise the Lord.

DINA: I don't think she works in the garden much. Ever since they got electricity in Tobu, I think people over there would rather sit around watching TV than weeding their gardens.

KAREN: That may explain why they haven't rallied to oppose the mining. So, what are Ana and Mama Mina up to?

DINA: Sounds like they are trying to get a grapevine network set up. If I'd known she was looking for a Kune to get involved I would have talked to her, but I didn't know. I think Yeri or Elsi would be a good contact from here, don't you? As it was I simply overheard a couple of men talking about how Ana is going around at night from village to village, talking to farmers about Naususu.

MAMA DEBORA: Well somebody has to do something. I mean Ben and his gang have the Governor convinced that everyone up here supports the mining and that just isn't true.

MAMA RUT: I heard from Rahel that Wilhem Lasi and a group of men over at Oelnono gathered for three days in a row complaining about the mining. I guess they're pretty angry about it.

DINA: I'm not surprised. Naususu is practically in their front yard. Besides that, nobody promised *them* any generators.

MAMA RUT: Wilhem said, "How can people enter our territory, make a racket right at our threshold, and then we just sit and be quiet about it?"

DINA: He's got a point. You know, since they started carrying marble out on those huge trucks, the road from Totmenas down to Kapan just keeps getting worse and worse. One of these days it's just going to crumble away. Know that steep incline above the grade school in Ajaobaki?

MAMA MARIA: You mean where the road washed out last year?

DINA: Yes, well they never did really fix it. When the rains come again I bet the *bemos* aren't going to be able to get past there. There's no embankment at all, and the road just keeps eroding into the chasm below.

MAMA MARIA: When Robert was here last week he was talking about people in Ajaobaki who lost their front yards when the bulldozer came through to widen the road just so the marble trucks could pass.

MAMA RUT: Lots of people lost fruit trees and never got repaid for their loss.

KAREN: Someone should make a list of all those losses. Remind me to talk to Robert about this next time he shows up.

DINA: That's something that Ana and her *lulbas* could be doing.

MAMA DEBORA: Ana likes to talk big but to actually do something productive, wait and see first…

KAREN: I've been meaning to ask. Remember when Eki brought his sister, *Tante* Feolina, up from Tbana for a visit?

MAMA MARIA: You mean after church last Sunday?

KAREN: Was it just a week ago? She was talking a lot about Naususu, but I didn't catch everything she said. Mama Rut, Mama Maria, can you help me out here?

MAMA MARIA: One of her sons works at Naususu. I guess going on five months now.

KAREN: Five months! That means he was already working in April! Ben didn't sign that contract with the mining company until May, and I didn't think anyone had started working until then. I can't believe how sneaky these guys are.

MAMA RUT: When I challenged Feolina for letting her son work there, she said he was doing it because of the money. She told him to give it a try if he wanted, that he could always quit. He gets 200,000 *rupiah* a month.

KAREN: That means he just moves loose rock. I remember Zaka telling us what he'd heard about wages over there. The drivers of the big trucks get a huge salary, something like 2.5 million *rupiah* a month, but none of the villagers around here can drive those things, or even work with the big machinery. All they can do is haul small rocks and for that they are paid a pittance.

MAMA MARIA: It's not a pittance if you've never worked for cash before.

KAREN: I suppose not.

MAMA RUT: I asked *Tante* Feolina if her son shares any of his earnings with her. She said, "Sometimes 50,000 *rupiah*, sometimes 100,000. The smallest he's given me is 25,000." So then I asked her, "You take and eat that money, but then there's the recitation of history. And later when it's all over, who's going to carry the burden for all that history?" And she said, "That child and his children. And we worry about that."

MAMA MARIA: Reminds me of when *Ibu* Betsi showed up that day. She wanted Tius to pray over the money her husband had earned at the mine. She thought that would keep her family safe.

MAMA DEBORA: Won't these people ever learn? All these people have are *money eyes* and that will come back to haunt them, mark my words.

KAREN: Mama Bora, excuse me please, but there's one more thing from *Tante* Feolina's conversation that I need to check. (*To Mama Rut and Mama Maria*) Didn't

Tante Feolina also say she was a part of the group that visited the Governor to get him to approve the mining?

MAMA MARIA: That's right.

KAREN: Why on earth did she do that?

MAMA MARIA (*scratches between the ears of the baby pig that's been rooting around by her legs)*: She said someone came and got her; Ben ordered someone to go and get her. But her younger brother Eki, he refused to go.

MAMA DEBORA: What does Eki say?

MAMA RUT: Eki says, "Until today my sister keeps coaxing me to go to work at Naususu, but I refuse. I tell her, 'You have a lot of children, I have only one. If one of yours disappears, you still have some, but if mine disappears, then he's totally gone. Just let me scratch the dirt so that God will bless me with food and drink." That's what he said. I asked if Mama Tia who lives over in Fatukoto had gone to work there and they said that she hadn't.

DINA: That's another one of Eki's sisters?

MAMA RUT: Yeah, his younger sister. Actually right now over in Fatukoto all their heavenly blessings are finished, gone.

KAREN: Heavenly blessings? What do you mean?

MAMA RUT: Because their blessings are gone, a lot of them have joined the prayer team, *Ibu*. Say somebody has an injury or gets sick while working on the mountain. They get better, but after that they join the Prayer Group.

HELENA: They don't go back to work at Naususu because they have dedicated their lives to the Lord and want to do God's work from now on.

MAMA RUT: That's what happened with Yuli Bani. She used to cook for the miners and take the food up there for them to eat. But then she got sick. So she repented and isn't cooking for them anymore. And then there are the two daughters of Herman Kaubnani. They also quit working.

DINA: Another one is Selma Sonbai's daughter. I heard she quit.

HELENA: That's right, she did.

MAMA RUT: Add one more, the daughter of Mina's younger sister.

HELENA: Don't forget Feri, Ima Baun's daughter, and also Yo's granddaughter. They've all been moved by the Holy Spirit and are doing the Lord's work now. And the Lord is using them to draw more and more people to the prayer group. Six more have joined recently. If they attend the prayer group regularly, then the Spirit is able to work through them to do the Lord's will. Thing is, most of the people there are far from the Lord.

MAMA DEBORA: If the women are leaving, it won't be long before the men follow. Maybe not all at once like the women, but one by one, they'll quit. Mark my words.

MAMA RUT: One of Ben's closest allies in Fatukoto, Sepri Osa, his older sister's child fell sick for 40 days and 40 nights.

MAMA MARIA: Yes, I heard they were pretty scared.

HELENA: Well, she was the first one to withdraw from helping at Naususu. After that it was Ori Seko.

KAREN: Now, if one has been blessed with a heavenly gift, is it OK to farm?

MAMA RUT/HELENA: Sure. / It's fine.

KAREN: Farming doesn't matter? So the work that is prohibited is just what does damage to nature, like the mining?

MAMA RUT: *Ibu*, if no one farms, who's going to pray?

HELENA: We have to farm. How can we not farm? We aren't meant to sit around and pray all the time without working. That isn't right. We must pray and work.

KAREN: But it must be work that's honorable, right?

HELENA: Yes, that's honorable. At the beginning of the year, there will be a whole lot of people joining. I was over in Sikam and we prayed there and about 10 people were called by the Spirit and joined to work the Lord's field. They had been doing worldly deeds, like gambling, but now that they've been moved by the Spirit, they are doing the Lord's work. So we pray continuously, but the Lord has His own moment to help people, for example when they're sick.

KAREN: So, according to the prayer team, mining doesn't please God's heart.

HELENA: Yeah.

KAREN: How do you know?

HELENA: Because when we ask for a sign, God answers.

MAMA DEBORA: Well dears, this is about all the praise and glory I can take for one night. I'm going to turn in. Night all. (*Pulling her sweater around her more tightly, she stands up, takes a flashlight from her pocket and turns it on as she leaves the kitchen.*)

MAMA RUT: I hear Tina crying, I best go check on her.

DINA: Have you seen Yes around today? He was going to go look for Grandpa Sarus's old sow who dug a hole under the fence and got out of the yard. If they don't find her

she's bound to dig up the peanuts over in *Om* Fanus's field that they haven't harvested yet and then we'll really have a mess on our hands.

MAMA RUT (*before opening the kitchen door to go outside*): I think I saw him sitting and talking to Tomas over in Manu Ana earlier this evening. But I didn't stop to chat. It's possible it was someone else, though, my eyes aren't as sharp as they used to be.

MAMA MARIA (*a child who has been quietly crying in the background begins to howl*): Sounds like somebody's run out of patience. You better get going.

MAMA RUT: Right. Good night.

OTHERS: Night. See you tomorrow. Sleep well. Give Tina a spank from me.

HELENA: Dina, is it OK if I stay with you and Grandpa Sarus tonight? It's getting pretty late. I know the Lord would protect me, but I'd just as soon wait until daylight to walk through Beli Woods. I'd rather not bump into any *nitu* tonight…

DINA: Of course. It's been awhile since Grandpa Sarus has seen you, so I warn you. He'll bend your ear about how naughty the grandkids have gotten, but never mind. (*To Mama Maria*) Well, *Tante*, we best get going before we can't pull ourselves away from this cozy fire. See you tomorrow. (*nodding to Karen*) *Ibu*. (*Dina and Helena get up and gather their shopping baskets.*)

HELENA: *Ibu* Karen, Mama Maria, excuse us. (*Dina and Helena duck their heads through the kitchen door, a gust of wind slamming it behind them.*)

KAREN: I was half-expecting *Om* Tius to show up by now.

MAMA MARIA (*takes a clump of cotton from the basket behind her and begins to pull out the brown seeds*): He's probably still over in Hoineno. No need to wait up for him if you're sleepy.

KAREN: I know, I just thought I'd get his impressions of the oral history Papa Lius gave today. But I'll check with him tomorrow. It was a hike over there today. I'd forgotten how far it is...and all uphill on the way back. I am tired, that's for sure. Guess I'll go on ahead to bed too. Don't stay up too late.

MAMA MARIA: Night, *ibu*.

[Lights fade as Karen takes her bag and scarf from the nail, pulls the scarf around her neck, and hunches her shoulders to duck out the kitchen door. The stage is dark.]

Scene II: Mama Maria, Papa Tius, and Ana in the Kitchen

[A recording of the *natoni* recited at the beginning of the play is amplified over loud speakers as lights come up slowly on Mama Maria's kitchen. Mama Maria and Papa Tius are sitting on low stools by the fire. Mama Maria is spooning boiled corn and peanuts onto a plate that Papa Tius has extended towards her. As Papa Tius begins to eat, Mama Maria cuts the shell of a betel nut. They continue this way for about a minute when the *natoni* begins to slowly fade out.]

MAMA MARIA: *Ibu* Karen seemed pleased about the oral history, I think. (*a longish pause, Papa Tius keeps eating hungrily*) Dina was wondering if Yes had found Grandpa Sarus's sow.

PAPA TIUS (*his mouth full*): That sow loose again? They should just butcher it. She's more trouble than she's worth. Fanus got his peanuts in yet? (*Mama Maria shakes her head and stirs some embers.*) That's what I was afraid of. I told him last week to start getting his peanuts in. You'd think he'd want them to rot in the ground. Well, I hope for Yes and Dina's sake that Yes caught that sow before she gets to Fanus's peanuts (*keeps eating*).

MAMA MARIA (*spooning coffee powder from a metal tin and sugar from a glass jar into two plastic mugs, she then dips boiling water out of a pan over the fire and pours it into the mugs, stirring. She sets one of the mugs before Papa Tius.*): Oh, that man from the Forestry Bureau was here again, what's his name? Neno?

PAPA TIUS: Good thing I was gone.

MAMA MARIA: He wasn't alone this time. He brought half the *kabupaten*'s officials with him, I think. There was a man from the Social Something or Other Department and two men from the Economy Department, I think they said. There were at least a dozen of them. Since you weren't here they walked on down to Grandpa Sarus's place.

PAPA TIUS: They just aren't going to stop until they take every last bit of sandalwood.

MAMA MARIA: Well, Markus says there's some Chinese man he knows in Kupang who wants to buy.

PAPA TIUS (*scraping his plate*): If Markus wants to move on this then he should be over here to deal with all the scoundrels trying to get their hands on our sandalwood instead of praying and preaching over there in Fatumnasi. There must not be much sandalwood on the market these days. Why else would so many bureaucrats and complete strangers show up wanting to negotiate prices? Wears me out.

MAMA MARIA: I'm tired with it all too. (*She sips some coffee.*) I thought I'd weed the garlic patch over by Tui Susi tomorrow. (*In the distance the sound of an approaching motorcycle is heard.*) I wonder who that could be.

PAPA TIUS: We'll find out soon enough. Could be Robert is back already although I doubt he'd come up at this time of night… Yeah, I'm afraid the garlic is looking pretty poor this year. It's just so dry. (*The dogs begin to bark.*)

MAMA MARIA: I swear it's the mining. It's going to dry up all of our springs.

[Voices are heard outside the door before Ana, wearing thongs, pants, and a heavy sweater hurries in.]

ANA (*squatting close to the fire, holding her hands above the embers*): Good night to you two! I thought everyone would be in bed by now.

MAMA MARIA: They are. Did Lester bring you?

ANA: No, Filus did. Lester's trying to finish the kiosk in front of our house.

MAMA MARIA: You rebuilding?

ANA: Since we moved into our new house, we haven't had a chance to work on it. But I want to see how these new banana chips I've made sell. So, time for a kiosk.

MAMA MARIA: Want some coffee?

ANA: That'd be great.

PAPA TIUS: Why don't you call Filus to join us?

ANA: Let it be. He's exhausted, said he just wanted to go to sleep.

PAPA TIUS: Anything happening at Naususu tonight?

ANA: How long have they had lights up at night? Sounds like they've started to drill at night.

MAMA MARIA: They started that just a few days ago. 24 hours, all day, all night. I try to ignore it, but it's hard.

ANA: So, Papa Tius, have you thought some more about what I suggested in terms of a visit to Sonbai?

PAPA TIUS (*takes some betel nut and chews awhile before answering*): Haim Eki and Tomas are ready to go. Maybe we can get *Ibu* Karen and *Pak* John to help out with their

car. I think the Sonbai king's residence over in Bikau Niki is a long ways from the highway. It'd be good to go in a car.

MAMA MARIA: Don't forget. At least twice we've heard gossip that *Pak* John is the anti-mining sponsor. We don't want to involve them any more than we must.

PAPA TIUS: It should be OK as long as Gerson drives. No need at all for *Pak* or *Ibu* to go along.

ANA: Well, when do you think this is going to happen? Lester and I want to come along.

PAPA TIUS: Let's talk to *Ibu* Karen tomorrow. Maybe we can get word down to Noelbaki so that the car can meet us at the Takari intersection on Thursday. (*Papa Tius takes some dried vines and holding the ends of three strands between his toes begins braiding the vine into tight rope.*)

MAMA MARIA: If possible, please try not to pass by way of Naususu. I believe what I hear. If they caught you all, especially if they got wind that you're planning a visit to Sonbai... well, you'd be lucky if all you got was a beating.

PAPA TIUS: We can get to Kapan by way of Bes Ana, if need be. Don't worry, we'll be careful.

ANA: Ben's gone way overboard this time. *Om* Sem would turn in his grave, I'm sure, if he saw *Fatu* Naususu right now.

PAPA TIUS: I should have known better when I suggested Ben be the one to live in the Ajaobaki *istana* after *Om* Sem died. Ben has money eyes and that'll be his downfall for sure.

ANA: I know it's going to take awhile, but I think it's possible to get the people of Mollo to shut down the mining like they did before.

PAPA TIUS: Maybe, but Ben learned well from our first demonstration. He identified all the elders who opposed the mining and then targeted them to receive money and generators and all sorts of promises this round so they wouldn't put up any resistance. I really don't know how many people oppose it. How many times have Robert and his NGO wanted to hold meetings here with farmers, to try to get some kind of protest movement going? But you know how it is. People don't show up.

MAMA MARIA: Who's surprised? Activists from outside the region, don't speak our language...who wants to show up?

ANA: I know. I've been trying to get time off from work to come up here, but it hasn't been easy. It's like I have to keep proving how the mining relates to women's health and violence against women before my NGO will let me spend time on this. But I don't care if they are looking for reasons to get rid of me. I've started visiting villages at night and I'm putting together a team of *lulbas* so we have a local communication network going.

MAMA MARIA: Yes, Dina mentioned she heard Mama Mina was looking for a contact in Lelobatan.

ANA: That's right. I'm trying to get people together, but only late at night. Ben has spies everywhere. I've begun to visit key elders in several villages. So far I've been to Nefokoko, Bijaepunu, Bosen, and Fatumnasi. The Village Head in Nefokoko is surprisingly supportive. I don't know what he tells the *camat*, but he suggested we hold meetings at his house instead of the village office. Then there's Grandpa Lasa in Bijaepunu. He must be more than 70 years old. He has three wives. He isn't going to give in at all to Ben, but he did tell me that representatives from the *Bupati*'s office in Soe showed up with a bottle of palm whiskey and 50,000 *rupiah*. He refused to accept

their gifts, but I told him that if he's approached again to go ahead and take whatever is offered. As long as he doesn't touch the stuff we can use it as proof of attempted bribery.

PAPA TIUS: If only all the elders were as afraid of history. I heard that *Om* Melki Oematan in O'Aluk and Kristian Baun in Bes Ana have already accepted generators from Ben.

MAMA MARIA: That's a risk they'll have to take. But you know, even in Fatukoto not everyone supports the mining. Mama Rut told me that Rahel went over there a few days ago to visit Fia and on her way home she saw old Papa Feris by the side of the path chopping up a big *besak* tree he had burned down in the middle of the forest. When she asked him what he was doing, he said he was cutting up wood to make a fence for his garden. When she asked him why he was taking a tree from the forest he said, "If the Forestry Department tries to stop me, I'll let them have it. Why can they permit all that forest around Anjaf to be totally destroyed and not let out one peep, but the second we farmers cut down one tree, they're all over us?" Guess he was pretty angry.

PAPA TIUS: Yeah, Forestry is one big bunch of corrupt hypocrites as far as I'm concerned. Just look at what they try to pay us for sandalwood year after year. That makes me wonder, though, where they carted off all the trees they cut down over at Anjaf-Naususu. Somebody got a lot of lumber out of those trees.

ANA: So, Papa Tius, when do you think you can get people together to meet?

PAPA TIUS: I think it will be more effective if I'm not the one to do this. (*Having finished braiding the rope he hangs it on a peg on one of the posts.*) I'm implicated enough as it is. If you can get some other folk involved I think it will be better in the long run.

ANA: Well, you know ever since Stefan went off to visit ministers in Jakarta to protest the mining he's disappeared. I guess Ben was furious when he heard about the trip. But maybe I can talk to Stefan's father. Afterall, he is the *Kepala Desa* of Lelobatan. It's not going to look very good if Stefan has come out publicly against the mining and his Dad is just quiet.

MAMA MARIA: *Om* Titus may be *Kepala Desa*, but his wife's the strong one. Nansi's not afraid to let people know how she feels about the mining.

ANA: Yes, I'll talk to Mr. Titus in the morning. He should be at the office. Sooner or later we're going to push those miners out of Mollo, just wait and see.

PAPA TIUS: Ben and his cronies have got *leu-leu* laid out around here that is making it difficult for people to resist. But so many people have been praying so many prayers lately that in time some of these guys should get struck down themselves by some *lefi*.

ANA: Would that it were Ben.

PAPA TIUS: That's what a lot of people have been praying for. Listen, before you go tomorrow, Maria has some money we got from selling malaria medicine. You need to take it for Osa's school fees, OK?

ANA: I'm glad you reminded me. I've got so many school kids living in my house in Soe these days it's hard for me to keep track of whose fees are paid and whose aren't. So good, I'll get the money in the morning.

PAPA TIUS: That'll be fine. (*Without another word, Papa Tius goes to the side of the kitchen, opens up the woven blanket he has wrapped around his waist, lies down on a low bed, and draws the blanket up over him, his back to the kitchen fire.*)

ANA: *Kakak* Ria, I get so tired going from village to village. Sometimes I wonder if it's worth it, but this is our territory and we have a right to protect it.

MAMA MARIA: More than a right, Ana. Don't forget your history.

ANA: I know. We have an obligation too. I feel that. A lot of people feel that. But it is so hard to bring together everyone who feels that way because it has been so long since we've had to do this. It's much harder this time than it was in 1998. Besides, you should talk. When the *camat* came to talk in the church and brought members from the TTS mining bureau, where were the women?

MAMA MARIA: Yes, he came several weeks ago. Who told you about the meeting?

ANA: Yeri. He said a few men stood up and asked some good questions about the legitimacy of the mining, but the man from the mining department said he was simply there to provide technical information. When I asked Yeri if any women attended the meeting he said no.

MAMA MARIA: No, we didn't. You know we don't go to meetings unless the *hansip* comes around and threatens us to make a showing at something. There were no orders for us to show, so we didn't. Women are lazy when it comes to meetings.

ANA: Well, I can't be lazy. I need to do something and that's why I'm going around to as many villages as I can. I think a lot of these *tua-tua adat* I approach wonder, "Who does this little skinny kid think she is?" The main thing, though, is that some of them have finally begun to trust me. Whenever I show up in Bijaepunu, Grandpa Lasa won't let me out of his sight. He wants me to sit right next to him all the time.

MAMA MARIA: Old lecher. He's old enough to be your Grandfather, don't forget.

ANA (*laughing*): I don't mind. I tease him and he appreciates the attention. And he's solid, really solid. When this is over I want to try and get equipment to record him doing an oral history because he really knows it.

MAMA MARIA: Ana, you always have 100 plans and nothing much ever comes of any of them. Please be careful.

[Lights fade as Mama Maria stands up to put the coffee mugs in a plastic tub and Ana sits gazing thoughtfully into the fire.]

Scene III: Ana and Vandana in Liminal Space

[Lights come up center stage to illuminate Vandana wearing a sari and sitting on a high stool. She is absorbed in reading a bound manuscript. As she turns a page, Ana comes into the light from stage right, bent over picking some unseen plants from the ground and putting them into a shoulder bag that is already filled with plants, a few sticking out from the bag. Head down the entire time, Ana moves closer and closer to where Vandana sits. Just as she almost touches Vandana's legs she swings her body around, still picking and looking at the ground, to face back towards stage right. This motion brings her bottom close enough to hit Vandana's feet at which Ana jolts upright and whirls around while Vandana simultaneously jerks her head up. The two notice each other for the first time.]

ANA (*lets out a little yelp and then nervously laughing, covers her mouth briefly before speaking*): Please excuse me. I am so sorry. I didn't see you at all. I didn't think anyone was around here.

VANDANA: And I thought the exact same thing, so we are both startled. But please, it's perfectly alright, no need to feel embarrassed. Please, have a seat (*she motions to a high stool on her right*).

ANA (*holding back*): Oh no, I don't want to bother you.

VANDANA: It's no bother at all. Really. I've been reviewing this galley since early this morning and I am quite ready for a break. (*She closes the manuscript, lays it in her lap, and takes off her glasses.*) So what is it you are doing out here in the middle of nowhere?

ANA (*looking around in surprise*): I guess this **is** nowhere, isn't it? (*Talking to herself*) That's strange. I was just in the woods above Rahel's house... Guess I got lost somehow. Oh well (*shrugs her shoulders*), I'm here now. (*To Vandana*) Actually I was out looking for some forest plants.

VANDANA: Really? What kind of plants?

ANA: Here, look (*she takes some bark from her bag and hands it to Vandana who puts her glasses back on to look at it, sniffs it*). That's bark from the red wood tree. We boil and drink the juice to build up the blood.

VANDANA (*removing her glasses again and handing back the bark*): That's something. If you don't mind me asking, What else have you got in there? (*Points to Ana's bag.*)

ANA (*replaces the bark in her bag, fishes around in her bag a bit more*): Let's see, I've got some squash seeds to use with lemon peel to make poultices (*holds her hand out to show seeds and then dumps them back in her bag*). And here's some turmeric (*she briefly holds out another plant*). That's real good for burning into wounds to help them heal. Now where is that *tumalawak*? Oh, here (*she pulls out a plant with a bulbous root*). It looks a bit like turmeric, but see, the leaves are different and the bulb isn't as big. This is what we call *tumalawak*. I used up the last of the *tumalawak* I planted at my house, so I need to plant some more.

VANDANA: What do you use it for?

ANA: It's good for keeping the urinary tract clean. I also take it when I have menstrual cramps and it really helps. Here, you can have this one, I already have several in here (*patting her bag*).

VANDANA (*takes the plant Ana holds out to her and sniffs it*): Hmm...smells a bit like sandalwood and something else I know from India, let me think. I know, it's what you just mentioned. The smell reminds me of sandalwood and turmeric. How do you prepare it?

ANA: Oh...so, you're from India. I knew you weren't from around here, not in those clothes. I mean it's very nice what you're wearing, it's just that I've never seen anyone wear anything like it before, except on TV. We get a lot of movies from India on TV here. What's your dress called?

VANDANA: It's called a sari. They're very common in India. (*Holding up the plant in her hand*) Please, this plant, how do you prepare it?

ANA: Oh, right. Well that depends on whether you want it fresh or dried. If fresh, clean the root, peel the skin, slice the root thinly and boil it. You can add love fruit leaves or roots from the tall thatching grass if you want. After it's boiled about 15 minutes, filter it and drink it.

VANDANA: If dried?

ANA: Wash and peel the root, slice it thinly, and dry it. Once it's good and dry, just pound it up and use it like any other powdered drink. Put a bit into hot water and stir. You don't need much powder...only about ½ teaspoon.

VANDANA: What's its name again?

ANA: *Tumalawak*. The plant I'm really having trouble finding, though, is *nisa jaob*.

VANDANA: These plants, are you selling them to anyone?

ANA: Goodness no. We drink *tumalawak* all the time. That's why I don't have any left at home, but it grows well. So I'm going to take these back home to plant and see if we can't keep ourselves supplied from now on instead of having to go to the forest every time we run out. As for the *nisa jaob*, one of my neighbors, he must be close to 80 – he's like this (*she holds up her right index finger bent over*) – and he's been having bad lower back pain. Could be his kidneys. Anyway, when his niece heard I was coming up here, she asked me to bring back some *nisa jaob* if I could find any.

VANDANA: I'd offer to help you look for it, but I'm afraid I wouldn't be much help. Please, do sit down awhile (*pointing again to the stool at her side*). Obviously I can't offer you anything to drink, but I can offer you this seat.

ANA: Well, if you're sure you don't mind. (*Ana settles herself on the stool, hangs her bag over the back of it, and folds her hands in her lap.*)

VANDANA: I hope you realize just how precious your knowledge about these plants is.

ANA: Oh, it's not so precious. Ask anyone around here and they can tell you the same thing.

VANDANA: It may not be secret knowledge for you, but around the world it's this kind of knowledge that is disappearing. When ecologies are disturbed and plant and animal species begin to disappear, then the knowledge about them has a way of disappearing too.

ANA: I'd never thought of that before. So, are you out collecting disappearing knowledge for someone? You sure seemed interested in how to fix *tumalawak*.

VANDANA: Me? No, I am more interested in alerting people to the dangers of disturbing indigenous ecologies and knowledge systems.

ANA: I sure know what you mean about ecologies being disturbed. Right now, my community is split over the mining of this huge rock called Anjaf. A mining company from Java has been drilling away at it for several months now. They've also started drilling the peak next to it called Naususu. All the forest around Anjaf has been cut down and hauled away and some of the forest around Naususu is gone too. All the wild life that used to be there is gone now. It's just all gone. Monkeys used to live there and when the drilling began they left. But first their leader came out and chattered away at the people who were gathered there. People who saw it say it was just as if he were pleading for help. The miners are like pirates who have come to steal our forest and rocks.

VANDANA: Yes, it is a kind of piracy, isn't it? (*She makes a note on the back of the manuscript in her lap.*)

ANA: I've started to go around to villages in the area to try to find out what impact the mining is having. But until you mentioned knowledge being lost I hadn't thought much about the kinds of things people know related to the rocks. I guess some kinds of knowledge get lost or stolen too. Thank you for that insight, *Ibu*...your name please?

VANDANA: You may call me Vandana (*holding out her hand*). And your name?

ANA (*shaking hands with Vandana*): Ana.

VANDANA: Very nice to meet you, Ana.

ANA: The same. Excuse me, *Ibu* Vandana, but please tell me again, what is it you were reading?

VANDANA: Oh, this galley? (*pointing to the manuscript in her lap*) Well...

ANA: Excuse me, but what is a galley?

VANDANA: Oh, yes, well, it is a publisher's copy of a book that is almost ready to be printed. This is a book I wrote with a friend and we both need to read it one more time to check for mistakes. (*Holds out the manuscript for Ana to take*) Go ahead and take a look at it if you want. There are lots of marks in the margins you may not understand, but you're welcome to look at it.

ANA (*looks at the manuscript briefly, turns a page or two and then lets out a laugh*): It's not just marks in the margins I don't understand, I don't understand any of it. I'm sorry, but I can't read English. I should have known this would be in English (*returns the manuscript to Vandana*).

VANDANA: You don't read English? But you speak English just fine.

ANA (*puzzled, responds hesitantly*): Well, no, actually I don't. I've never been able to speak English, even when I've tried to learn it. I speak *Uab Meto* and Indonesian and a little bit of *Tetun*, but no English. I don't know what you hear when I speak, but as long as we can understand each other, I guess it doesn't matter that much. So please, tell me about your book. What's it called?

VANDANA: The title is *Ecofeminism*.

ANA (*trying the word out for herself*): Ecofeminism. I've heard that word before from NGO friends in Kupang. It has something to do with women's relationship to the environment, doesn't it?

VANDANA: Yes. Let's see, how to explain it? Take the mining of your mountain, for example. That is a kind of violence against ecology that comes from male-dominated structures. A central point of ecofeminism is that there is a connection between violence against nature and violence against women. That connection is patriarchy.

ANA: Hmm. It is true that the mining company and the local government and elders who support it are all men. Those who oppose it are men too, but also there are many women angry about it, like me.

VANDANA: Many feminists have come to see that women can't struggle for political liberation alone, but that their struggle must be a struggle to preserve life on the planet.

ANA: Well, I wouldn't say there is any kind of women's movement among the women farmers I know, but I feel certain they will soon be ready to move against the mining. It's just a matter of time.

VANDANA: So perhaps in your context the awareness for women will come another way. Maybe through opposing the mining or other environmental disasters women will come to see there is a connection between that violence and violence against women.

ANA: Maybe. It's true we have a lot of violence in our lives. Beatings, incest, bride price, sexually transmitted diseases women get from their husbands. Right now, though, the overwhelming violence is this mining. All I think about these days is how to get it shut down. But it is really hard to get the farmers together to put pressure on the government. A lot of the protestors would like to have a new king, somebody to protect their interests, so I've been thinking about how to give new life to our *adat*. Since *Om* Sem died, there is no more *adat* leadership anyone respects, despite the government's efforts to use Ben as a token king.

VANDANA: Excuse me, what's *adat*?

ANA: Our traditional customs and laws. We need these to keep investors and the government from taking over our communal lands. I also see this as an opportunity to protect our plants and seeds. You know, ever since farmers in North Mollo began to

grow carrots a few years ago we no longer have garlic and red beans. People don't eat the carrots, they just try to sell them at market. When they grew beans, at least they ate them. There are also lots of forests foods that people don't use anymore.

VANDANA: Yes, yes, care of seeds is so important (*writes more notes on her manuscript*). Who guards seeds in your community?

ANA: Well, in Mollo, throughout West Timor actually, women are the only ones who have access to the *loteng* in the round houses, that's the platform above the cooking fire where the seed corn is kept. And it's not just any woman either. The wife may go up there, as well as any unmarried daughter, or the wives of married sons. But married daughters are not allowed to enter their father's *loteng* because once they've married they have entered another man's realm.

VANDANA: What about the forest foods you mentioned?

ANA: There's *kot laos,* that's a kind of bean, and *laku sipu* and *paz,* those are both a kind of wild cassava. There's also *fael*, but I've never eaten it.

VANDANA: And I bet it is the women who collect this food from the forest.

ANA: Actually it's not just women; men and children also. Anyone who knows how to cook these foods will gather them. But anymore, it's only when people are desperately hungry before you see them eat this. Well, that's not quite true. People still eat a lot of *kot laos* and honey in season. For the most part it is only men who collect honey, certainly they are the only ones who climb the trees to get it. But we are losing the trees where the bees made hives so the rituals that go with honey extraction could disappear. I see that.

VANDANA: And I see that women are indeed the ones who preserve seeds. My own background is in biology, so I have been particularly concerned about developments in microbiology and the genetic engineering of plants and animals. A lot of this technology is based on knowledge about plants and seeds that pharmaceutical and seed companies based in the US and Europe have taken from Third World countries. These companies then use patents to turn this biological information and these plants into their own private property.

ANA: I suppose that could be happening here too. My brother-in-law was telling me about this company, I think it's a lumber company, that is looking for five kinds of wood – *Kiu Tasi*, *Ampupu*, those are the really huge trees that the Forestry Department is always trying to get its hands on, *Kum Fautmetan*...let's see, what were the other two? Oh yeah, *Hau Sunaf*...and there's one more, but I don't remember which one. I know it wasn't sandalwood. There's hardly any sandalwood left. Anyway, Zaka told me they're paying 5,000 *rupiah* per kilogram for this wood.

VANDANA: Deforestation is a vast problem. And yes, it is certainly a form of, what did you say earlier? Oh yes, piracy. However, I see that there are different kinds of piracy. There is a difference between taking trees for lumber – like taking rock for marble – and taking trees to a laboratory somewhere so that their leaves and bark and roots can be converted into company-owned products.

ANA (*excitedly*): Wait a minute! I just remembered! I know what you're talking about. We've an example right here (*she points to the tumalawak plant on Vandana's lap*). A few years ago *tumalawak* powder started showing up in some of the stores in Kupang. Someone once offered me some and I was so surprised to see it coming out of a colorful

packet. I don't like the store-bought stuff at all, though. They've put sugar in it, but a lot of people like it sweet. I don't know whether or not the company that sells it has a patent on the plant, but I do know people in the city can now buy *tumalawak* in stores. When I think about it, it does seem strange. We've never sold it, we've always just planted it and used it whenever anyone was sick.

VANDANA: That's precisely the point. The act of sharing is essential to being human. Healthy social systems rely on the sharing of information, and knowledge can't grow unless ideas can be shared. But once knowledge is turned into private property, people will not share it anymore. This is already happening in university research. As more and more researchers work for private companies, they find themselves having to protect company trade secrets.

ANA: I guess there's a lot that farmers in Mollo need to be aware of. It's very hard to know what is behind requests that come from the outside, like this request for five particular kinds of wood. For the most part farmers don't care because they'll do anything for a little cash. We are so cash poor. But this mining has given some of us the push to think about our *adat* more seriously. I will need to add the problem of piracy to our future agenda. Thanks, *Ibu* Vandana, I like what you said about sharing – it *is* essential to being human!

[Lights out.]

Act III: The Academy

Scene I: The Academic Round Table

[Lights come up center stage to reveal a university conference room. The walls are panelled with inexpensive carpet, and several lights recessed into the ceiling give off neon light. A map of Southeast Asia hangs on one wall, a white board on another, and photos of pro-democracy Burmese activist, Aung San Suu Kyi and Nobel Peace Prize laureates from Timor Lorosae, Jose Ramos Horta and Bishop Belo, are on another. In one corner of the room is a small table with a large thermos, coffee powder, tea bags, etc. In another corner of the room sits Ghost of University Past, in white sheet with a white mortarboard on its head, piles of books and CD ROMs, bundled up in chains, on its lap. Ghost appears to be dozing. In the center of the room is a large round table with office chairs on rollers spaced around it. The table is covered with coffee mugs, a box of rolls, a tray of fruit, a stack of napkins, and piles of books and papers. Sandra, Donald, and Dianne are sitting around the table, sipping from mugs and chatting to each other in low tones.]

KAREN (*comes hurrying into the room, backpack over her left shoulder; she sets her backpack on an empty chair, and hangs her jacket over the back of it*): Morning everyone. Sorry I'm late. I don't have a parking permit this semester and so had to park across campus. I hope you haven't been waiting long. (*She begins taking things out of her backpack – a tape recorder, small digital camcorder, a map of North Mollo, masking tape.*)

DIANNE: No worries. We've been watching the play and...well, watching the play.

KAREN (*putting tape on the back of the map*): It's long, isn't it. Probably needs trimming. That's one thing I could use help with. But we won't start there. First of all, thank you all for coming. I really appreciate it. Please, help yourselves to the food, there's lots of it. (*Karen tapes the map to the white board at one end of the room while the fruit and rolls get passed around. Before heading back to her seat she elbows Ghost in the ribs, whispering loudly to it.*) Good grief, can't you stay awake? I'm going to need your help pretty soon and I don't want to embarrass either of us.

GHOST OF UNI. PAST (*rubbing its eyes, straightening its mortar board that's slipped down*): What did you say?

KAREN: I said, please try to remain alert. And don't worry (*motioning with her head to the professors around the table*), they can't see you or hear us when we talk, but you still need to keep a low profile, just not **that** low, OK?

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: Right. Got it (*sits up erectly, takes some play dough and toothpick out of a pocket in its sheet and starts to erect a building*).

KAREN (*taking her seat at the table*): Let's see. You all know each other, right? (*Heads nod*). And you all have drafts of my manuscript and have just finished watching the play. As you can tell, there are some bumps in my writing, and several conceptual knots I'm trying to smooth out. I thought I'd put one or two of the issues I seek help with on the table and we can take it from there. How does that sound?

SANDRA: Fine by me.

DONALD: Fire away.

KAREN: Actually, I'd like to begin with some points Donald makes about peasant micropolitics in Zimbabwe because I'm so struck by similarities in our work. (*Karen*

raises her head, clears her throat, and motions slightly to Ghost of Uni. Past to come to her. This takes a while as Ghost must carefully set the chained books and CDs from its lap onto the floor and then very slowly drag itself and its trails of heavy books and manuscripts up to the table, clouds of chalk dust following in its wake. Once at the table, Karen takes a key hanging on a long string around her neck, unlocks a padlock at the end of one of Ghost's book chains, and pulls out a photocopy before re-locking the chain. The professors, who cannot see Ghost, sip their drinks, making notes in their notebooks, etc. Karen speaks to Ghost while unlocking the books.) What are you making with the play dough?

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: The university provost asked me to build a prototype for a new engineering building that he can float by the Board of Trustees at their meeting next week. Want to have a look?

KAREN: Not now, maybe later. Get something to drink and go sit down. (*Ghost, trailing chalk dust, stops by the drink table before returning to its seat. Karen speaks to the professors, referring occasionally to the photocopy she has just taken from Ghost.*) Donald, one of the key points you make about conflicts over resources is that such conflicts are simultaneously symbolic and material, that the landscape is inscribed in both ways. You're writing about a National Park and Resettlement Scheme in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe, but Anjaf-Naususu is also a good case in point. The mining in Mollo incorporates some farmers into a capitalist structure of wage labor while symbolically it embodies, among other things, internal colonization. The investor is a colonizing force that turns the rock into a commodity.

DONALD: From what I've read and seen, those who don't accept Naususu as a commodity are building up political and social capital within their communities, not unlike what Chief Rekayi pulled off in the Kaerezia Resettlement Scheme in Zimbabwe when he fought evictions based on a claim to ancestral rights.

KAREN: Yes, Chief Rekayi does that, in part, by glossing over aspects of his ancestral history that might weaken those claims. The farmers of Mollo do a similar thing when they construct their history. For example, they have a history of using brush fires to protest Forestry Department policies, hardly an example of conserving traditional lands at all costs, but that history is conveniently forgotten when they idealize their role as legitimate preservers of the environment in North Mollo. Another similarity I see has to do with the state's cross purposes when it seeks to lay claim to the Anjaf-Naususu site. There was a period when the TTS Mining Department, Forestry Department, Livestock Department, and Tourism Bureau were all competing with each other for government control of the location. It's obvious who won, but this reminds me of the contestation for resource control you point to among Zimbabwe's National Parks, the Department of Rural Development, and the Veterinary Department, highlighted as it was by peasants' demands for a cattle dip.

DONALD: My point is there are no binary oppositions here. The state, like the group "peasants," is not monolithic. It consists of multiple agencies and individuals who often have conflicting interests. It's important we draw these out in our theorizing.

KAREN: It's certainly true that whatever united vision of regency development TTS government agencies may once have shared, ever since regional autonomy and efforts at decentralization, bureaucrats have no shame in being "one for one and none for all."

DONALD: Another thing that might help sharpen the cultural dimensions of resistance is to pursue something mentioned in the play. At one point you and Ella begin to consider the various uses and meanings of the land around Anjaf-Naususu. I see those variations as being linked to history although you haven't yet made that very explicit. It might help if you tried to understand more systematically how historical consciousness is remembered and invoked in the present.

DIANNE: Yes, I jotted down some notes at that point. The oral history identifies Naususu as one of the earliest settlement sites in West Timor and then later it's used as a cattle pen, and then later still as a race track.

KAREN: Excuse me, just for a moment. (*Hurrying to drowsy Ghost in the corner, Karen shakes it awake, unlocks its padlock and looks through the chain of books quickly while Ghost just sits rubbing its eyes; Karen picks out several articles, then speaks to Ghost.*) I don't know why you had to be a ghost. Now a genie, I could get excited about that, but a ghost? Please don't comment, just be willing to come when I clear my throat, OK? Thanks. (*Karen returns to her seat by way of the map on the whiteboard that she stops to examine.*) Sorry, I needed to check something on the map. OK, let me see what I can recall about land use around Anjaf-Naususu within a more chronological historical framework. Because these peaks were once so heavily forested, and also have caves in them, it's possible the site served as a refuge during times of tribal war and war with the Dutch. After the oral history session I learned that the cattle pen mentioned was never right at Anjaf-Naususu, but down the hill a ways. I don't know how the land was used during the colonial period, but a dominant and recurring picture regarding the field on the north side of Naususu is one of fallow land. For years this land was a grazing commons,

used first by water buffalo, then later by cattle. Farming in the area has traditionally been taboo.

There's also a story of farmers planting huge posts in the flat field in front of Naususu to prevent a plane from landing there. If true that would probably have been sometime around World War Two when the Japanese occupied Timor. Even in North Mollo families would hide their daughters when Japanese troops passed through because of their reputation for abducting young girls. Now, were there stories of girls being hidden at Naususu during this period that would be very interesting to pursue. Let me make a note of that (*Karen writes in a notebook*).

Now it's commonly accepted that for years and years until the mining began, Naususu was a sacred site. Its history, its name, the springs all around its base, its wild flora and fauna, its prominent appearance for miles around – all this contributes to the rock's sacred power. There's an Indian sociologist by the name of Baviskar who has written about environmental conflict in the Great Himalayan National Park. (*Referring to the article just taken from Ghost*) What she writes about sacred sites in that context carries over to Naususu. I quote from page 111:

> In articulating their opposition to the park and to ecodevelopment, villagers often use metaphors and analogies naturalizing their relationship with nature and attributing to it a timeless quality. The identification of certain spots in the upper reaches of the park as sacred sites endowed with mystical power adds another dimension of cultural signification to the park landscape, an aspect that reinforces the feeling of continuity and timelessness.

It makes sense that the sacredness of Naususu is invoked, possibly exaggerated, as a resistance strategy.

In the late 50s, perhaps in 1958 when TTS officially became a *Kabupaten*, a racetrack was built on the flat field at the foot of Naususu. This racetrack was revived in

1992, but that lasted only a few years. Then about 1995, the area was designated an Industrial Forest Plantation by the Forestry Department and was planted with mahogany. That's when farmers opened up gardens in the area for the first time. The mining incursions began in 1997. But up until the mining project, people still went there to pray.

These shifts in land use take on further meaning when considered along with a series of state efforts to appropriate *adat* on behalf of a state agenda. In 1988 and again in 1992, the *tua-tua adat* of TTS, as identified and brought together by the regency government, made a traditional oath to conserve the land. This history of oaths is invoked in a speech given by the *Bupati* in 1995 during yet another government-engineered ceremony. This time the *Bupati* explicitly seeks the cooperation of the *tua-tua adat* to support development, protect the environment, specifically sandalwood, and make the National Family Planning program successful. I should add that sandalwood, which had traditionally been a source of government revenue, was getting harder and harder to find.

A logo that weds symbols of local culture with nationalism was presented to the *tua-tua adat* at the ceremony in 1995. Some opponents to the mining speak of this logo as proof of the government's hypocrisy. They argue that the logo is a sign the government once recognized the *tua-tua adat* as guardians of the environment, yet it has now forgotten this logo and the conservation mandate it represents. Some farmers talk about taking the logo to the former TTS *Bupati*, who now is the provincial governor, to use it as a tool to protest the mining.

Sometime in the early 90s, Anjaf-Naususu was registered with the Department of Education and Culture as an historical site. I don't know if rumors I've heard are true,

but it has also been said the site was once part of a WWF reserve. When they wanted to open up the area for mining, the boundary markers were shifted so that the site fell outside the reserve.

DIANNE: Given this historical overview, it's clear that over the years the site has become more implicated in a discursive field of state power that draws on traditional cultural meanings to serve development agendas. Even the call to conserve the environment appears to be a government tactic for ensuring a supply of sandalwood for the government.

KAREN: On several occasions I witnessed the kind of pressure that sandalwood pirates put on farmers believed to still have some. The persistence and numbers of people who showed up at the Kunes to bargain for sandalwood suggests to me that the source is by now almost gone. Farmers don't want to plant it because it is no longer profitable for them. One farmer once told me that the sandalwood policy under the Dutch was much better for them because at least then the farmers were recognized as sandalwood owners and not just caretakers of what is now claimed as state property. But that's another story.

I understand the need to situate resistance in relation to shifting identities and interests. But Donald, I am confounded by your critique of Scott. You come down so hard on what you call the spatial separation of power and resistance. From my experience in Lelobatan, there were physical and discursive spaces separating those who supported the mining from those who opposed it. When people from one ideological camp moved into the space of another, and both sides did this, it was usually understood as spying.

SANDRA: I see it differently. The few references to spying seem limited to what men did. But there are several instances where women moved back and forth between the different "camps" without that kind of burden. Consider the communication link that ran from Mama Rut to her neighbor Rahel who, in turn, regularly visited her sister Fia over in Fatukoto. These women shared information quite openly. In the play there is also mention of a woman whose son worked at the mine, what was her name?

KAREN: You mean *Tante* Feolina, *Om* Eki's sister?

SANDRA: Yes. From the play I had the impression she had been right there at Mama Maria's house, an identified space of opposition to the mining, talking about her son's work at the mine. While at Mama Maria's she was also quite open about her group's trip to the governor to show him their support of the mining.

DIANNE: I also remember mention of a woman who went to Mama Maria's and Papa Tius's house to ask Papa Tius to purify the money her husband had earned at the mine.

KAREN: OK, I get the point about there being no rigid spatial dichotomies, but I still think you're a little tough on Scott. I don't think he's as essentialist as you make him out to be. You yourself talk about the Kaerezian women who cultivate the mountain slopes in the National Park that are not designated as arable as resisting both state and patriarchal claims to land control. Wait, I'll quote from the your article that was published in *Cultural Anthropology* (*turning some pages of the photocopy in front of her*). Here it is, page 368: "Women's agricultural practices literally inscribed their claims beyond the reach of state and patriarchal control, echoing the assertion of the 'right' to 'live freely' in scattered homesteads." You say it, right there, "beyond the

reach of" certain controls. I think that's what Scott is saying about arts of resistance – that subordinate classes have a space beyond the reach of the dominant class's control.

DONALD: OK, let's see if I can apply my point to your case. Think about the range of interests at stake in the mining. We have a pretty good picture of what's at stake for "the traditionalists," those who oppose the mining investor and the state. But what about those farmers who negotiated their subordination to the investor and the government differently and chose to work at the mine? You may not have been able to interview any of those farmers, but there's still value in reflecting on their motives for working at the mine rather than simply dismissing them as those who "sold out."

DIANNE: Thank you, Donald, I wanted to bring this up too. Clearly there was differential receptivity to the mining. For example, women, who are traditionally excluded from the public domain, were not involved when it came to decisions about the presence of the mining company. On the other hand, judging by the number of women who leave the mining to join the prayer group, women were among wage laborers at the mine.

KAREN: That's true. Some women were paid to cook for the miners, others worked alongside men to clear away the small bits of marble.

DIANNE: So, imagine reasons why these farmers would opt for wage labor. Think of what promises the mining held for men and women, not just the pitfalls. The rock is an instrument of power that cuts both ways – power for both the state and the investor when it is mined, power for the traditionalists when it is not. As a part of this exploration I would ask, Are there ways farmers were empowered through the mining?

KAREN: You're right. I must confess I have trouble imagining that anything at all positive could come from the mining, but I'll try. (*Karen clears her throat loudly to get Ghost's attention. Ghost, who has dozed off, sits up. When he sees Karen raise her eyebrows, Ghost sets down the chains of books from its lap, straightens its mortarboard, slowly gets up from its chair in the corner, and shuffles to the other end of the table, dragging chains of books and CDs behind it, leaving a trail of chalk dust in its wake. Karen unlocks the padlock holding the books to the chain and speaks to Ghost.*) Are you dragging around anything by Harding? Like *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?*

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: Like who's Harding?

KAREN: Very funny. Time you had your chains oiled. Good, here's what I'm looking for. (*She removes a book, re-locks the padlock, and pats Ghost on its mortarboard.*) Bye bye. (*Ghost returns to its seat in the corner.*)

SANDRA: Think of it as democratizing your project. You have done a good job of using marginalized lives as the starting point from which to think. That is the key to standpoint theory. But as you know, in standpoint theory there is no one single subject of universal knowledge as there is in conventional empiricism. Rather there are many different subjects, full of contradictions and opposed to each other. You yourself said it is not only the protesters who are subordinate to the investor and the state vis-à-vis the mining, but also those farmers who chose to work at the mine. If you can include them in your theorizing, it will strengthen whatever interpretive claims you make.

KAREN: The subjects of knowledge must also be subject to inquiry, right? High degrees of reflexivity are also important to standpoint theory. I find the language used by some Latin American liberation and feminist theologians helpful here. They write about

a hermeneutics of suspicion in which texts written from a perspective of dominance must be read carefully, with suspicion, rather than accepted uncritically as God's Divine Word. These theological perspectives actually were my first exposure to the need to eliminate, or at least minimize, dominant group interests and values in research, particularly at the stage of interpretation.

But maybe you're right, Sandra. Perhaps I've simply turned the tables and created a new essential class of ideal knowers, namely those who opposed the mining. Your warning about how Marx defined the industrial proletariat as the one socially distinctive group of people who, in his view, qualified as ideal knowers while he ignored peasants' or women's or slaves' lives is well taken. I also understand what you say about the ability of those at the "center" to consider the lives of those not at the center as a starting point in their thinking. This is where I would call for dialogue. (*Looking at the book*) This passage you quote from Patricia Hill Collins is great. I agree 100% with her that we need coalitions among autonomous groups in order to talk across our differences to develop more critical, fuller knowledge. But rather than presume I can think from others' lives, I'd rather be in conversation with them about their lives. That is what I have tried to do in my project here, but yes, it's still partial.

SANDRA: I'm not asking you to presume anything, only to privilege certain perspectives as a starting point in your thinking.

KAREN: Well, my starting point is obviously with the resisters to the mining. But maybe I need more than one starting point, huh? OK, I'll make a preliminary attempt at complicating my starting point. However, first of all I want to say we need to be careful when talking about farmers who work at the mine as having chosen to do so. The word

"chosen" too easily masks conditions of coercion that may have influenced their decision. It is precisely their position of subordination that makes these farmers vulnerable to the offer of material gain in the hopes it will bring them out of this position. If the decision to work at the mine had been a free choice, why were some people nervous about the money they earned from it?

DONALD: Yes, I wanted to say that the woman who wants her husband's mining wages prayed over reminds me of the peasants turned miners in Columbia who Taussig writes about in his book, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism.* (*Karen coughs loudly, bends down as if to tie her shoe, and tosses the key underneath the table to Ghost who unlocks its padlock, finds the Taussig book. Ghost quietly and very discretely places the book on the corner of the table along with the key.*) Her relation to money earned from the mining seems a classic instance of commodity fetishism. If you aren't familiar with that book, you should read it.

KAREN (*nonchalantly gets up from her seat and moves to the end of the table to pick up the book and key Ghost has tossed there; holding up a tattered copy of Taussig's book*): One of my professors gave this to me some years back. I read it at a time when I was totally absorbed in the life of the protesting farmers around me. I need to reread it to help me think critically about the changes faced by those peasants who worked at the mine. But, at your encouragement, I'll make a preliminary effort to think from their situation.

The basic economy of Mollo is a mix of subsistence farming and commercial agricultural production for a local market. Families generally get cash from the sale of livestock and certain foods – carrots, garlic, oranges, some spices, sometimes coffee. Men also may get seasonal work, sometimes within their own villages, but more often

outside. They are usually paid in food and wages, depending on the type of work they get and who hires them.

DIANNE: Sounds much like the economy of the small farmers in the Zambrana-Chacuey region in the Dominican Republic.

KAREN: Yes. (*Getting up out of her chair, she goes to refill her mug, passing Ghost on the way back to her chair and whispers*) "Trees as Tools, Trees as Texts," Dianne Rocheleau.

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: (*grumbling*) I'm getting weary of this.

KAREN: Look, Ghost, this is why you are here, this is your raison d'être and your interminable fate. You ain't got desperately seeking graduate students, you ain't got nothin'. I'm sorry if the means of production have turned you into a book slave choking on chalk dust, but universities were not my idea, OK? Right now you need to put up or shut up, or, if you have a problem with my attitude, take it up with the provost. About time these universities went virtual anyway.

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: OK, OK, I understand, you're not 100% happy about…well, me. (*Handing her a book*) Here, look in this anthology, I'm pretty sure Rocheleau has an article or two in there.

KAREN (*not giving Ghost a second glance, Karen leafs through the book as she returns to her seat*): I've read some of the things you've written about the social forestry project in the Dominican Republic. Like the acacia trees you write about, it seems the rocks in North Mollo are also like tools and also texts – they are multipurpose and multivalent. One difference I see is that unlike Zambrana-Chacuey, I wouldn't say land in North Mollo is concentrated in the hands of the state or corporate interests, at least not yet, but

there are indications it may be moving in this direction. The state is more explicit than ever in its use of both trees, through Industrial Forest Plantations, and rocks, through mining, to expand its material and not just its discursive domain onto traditional lands.

But I'm veering from the task at hand. Empowerment and mining...right. Before the mining there were next to no opportunities for women in North Mollo to work as wage laborers. The families who shifted from farming to mining, and these were almost all families who live in Fatukoto (*pointing to the map*), become more embedded in a market-dominated economy that is still not yet a market-oriented one – I have Taussig to thank for this distinction. No doubt some women welcomed the chance to earn a wage if they thought it would strengthen their bargaining position, both domestically and socially. Earning a wage provides more regular cash, I suppose, than selling small amounts of produce once a week at the market.

DONALD: And if men's opportunities for wage labor usually take them far from the villages, they would have welcomed the opportunity to work closer to their homes.

KAREN: Yes, but greater dependency on a market economy may make them more vulnerable to loss of land. If they no longer directly depend on land for their livlihood, then it becomes easier for them to sell it. I can't say I've seen evidence of that yet, but then neither has there been a source of sustained wage labor in the region before the mining. Oops, there I go again – taking the wrong side of the view. It's just that this exercise makes me feel like a cheerleader for development.

OK, empowerment... It's possible there were farmers who believed the government was genuinely seeking to do something about its unfulfilled development promises. Scholarships for children, zinc roofs, electric generators, improved roads, a

new roof for their church in Fatukoto – these were all promises that went along with the mining project. Given the government's abysmal track record when it comes to development projects, it's hard to imagine farmers would accept such promises at face value, but perhaps they placed their hopes in the investor. It's interesting to note, the promises were not for consumer goods, but for basic infrastructural services associated with modernity. With the exception of scholarship money, the promises have a communal rather than individual appeal and this may also have accounted for the farmers' receptivity. They welcomed the opportunity for their community to progress as they saw it. (*Snapping her fingers she addresses Ghost in a kind of singsong voice*) Oh Ghost, I need Nenomuti's *Pah Mollo*, but NOW. Hop to, please! (*Ghost drags itself up to the table while Dianne is talking.*)

DIANNE: I can also see how working at the mine might contribute to a sense of civic pride and participation. Not only could miners earn regular cash incomes, they could do so legally, knowing they were fulfilling their role as good Indonesian citizens.

KAREN: No doubt there was a lot at stake in decisions about whether or not to work at the mine. Several times I heard Papa Tius pity those who supported the mining; he'd say they didn't really want to, they just were too weak to refuse. He also said those who worked there were neglecting their fields, so the presence of the mine and opportunities, even pressures, to work there create a number of difficult choices for farmers. They are faced with a decision between mining and farming, between stronger and weaker incorporation into a cash economy, between distancing or intensifying one's relation to local history and place. (*Undoing Ghost's book chain, Karen continues talking to the professors.*) Oh yes, there's at least one other opposition, as Mama Rut and Helena

remind us in the play, mining vs. doing the Lord's work, at least if one joins a Prayer Group.

(*Taking a book from the chain, she snaps the padlock back in place and speaks to Ghost.*) Look, I apologize for snapping at you just now. It's just that I'm under a lot of stress right now. You want to take a break, go ahead. But please hurry back. This shouldn't take much longer, but who knows when I'll need you.

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: Thanks, I could use a dust break. I start to feel exposed if I don't powder my sheet every so often. Keep an eye on my prototype, will you? (*Ghost drags itself out of the room.*)

KAREN (*speaking to the professors*): Time's getting short, so I'd like to direct our discussion to Timorese cosmology and constructions of gender and gendered space for the ways these may be invoked as part of the farmers' resistance. You may have noticed that the mountains mentioned in the oral history are paired: Mutis goes with Bi Kekneno, Mollo with Naususu. These are gendered pairs that reflect a basic dualism in *meto* cosmology where there's a sky father, *Uis Neno*, and earth mother, *Uis Pah*.

One of the local culture experts is *Pak* Nenomuti who worked for years in the TTS *Bupati*'s office. He's retired now, but talk about shifting identities! He's produced a lot of documentation on origin myths, indigenous social structures and rituals, the significance of nature to the Timorese, stuff like that. Part of this is *Pak* Nenomuti's own personal interest, but he is definitely a product of a New Order government that needed a show piece to drag out whenever a discourse of environmental conservation was deemed expedient. Well, *Pak* Nenomuti was one of the mediators appointed by the *Bupati* in 2000 to settle the mining dispute.

DONALD: Sounds like the government saw the social-cultural-historical relations between the people and the rock as central to the protest and so set out to break them.

KAREN: Oh I think they saw it that way, very much so. But publicly they never directly acknowledged this power and tried to limit the discourse of conflict to nothing more than a family feud.

DIANNE: So was the position of this local cultural expert regarding the mining ever clear?

KAREN: Oh yes, he supported the mining. And I've always been curious how this proponent of *meto* customs and rituals resolved the seeming contradiction for himself.

DIANNE: It would be good if you could try to interview him. But yes, if a well-known cultural expert who spoke on behalf of *meto* customs was seen to back the mining, then so might other "traditionalists."

KAREN: I found an account by *Pak* Nenomuti that gives some insight into *meto* cosmology. According to the myth, *Uis Neno*, God of the Sky, created a human from mud. The mud was mixed with rocks, some oval and some round. The rocks became the bones of the human, the oval ones were the bones in the arms and legs and the ribs, whereas a round rock formed the human's skull. Earth was the meat or flesh of the body, water became the blood, and dirt became the arteries.

He writes that during what he calls heathen times, the people viewed the land, rocks, water, etc. as one unity with humanity itself. Humans originate from earth, rocks, water and waste. As long as they live, they will be on top of the earth and after they die they will return to the earth and be covered up with rocks. So the *meto* people understand the earth to be like their flesh, water their blood, the forest their hair, the animals are like

lice, the rivers and streams their arteries, and landslides are their wounds. They view the earth as a mother who holds people in her palm or on her lap and nurses and protects them. Several different times I heard this same sort of story from Papa Tius. It helps explain how damage to the earth is felt as damage to humanity.

SANDRA (looking at notes she has just written): Hmmm. He writes about heathen times, doesn't he? You may have a clue right there to Mr. Nenomuti's contradiction. Does he go to church?

KAREN: I'd say more than 90% of the people in TTS are Protestant and the church plays a very large role in their lives.

SANDRA: So, when he needs to he can write off this gendered construction about mother earth as being heathen. For some Christians, the mining may be seen as a way to eliminate lingering and dangerous heathen beliefs.

KAREN (*furiously writing in her notebook*): That's something to consider, although I never saw any evidence of it. That would be a little difficult to reconcile with the conservative Christian prayer groups who opposed the mining. Still, it could be a research thread to pursue in the future. Right now I'm just trying to articulate links between gendered constructs and resistance. The *meto* world is full of binary categories: male/female, outside/inside, raw/cooked, wild/tame, hot/cold. Just as there are male and female rocks, the seas are also gendered – the Timor Sea to the south is male, the Sabu Sea to the north, female. For the most part these pairs suggest a relationship of complementarity rather than of opposition or hierarchy.

But there are a couple of caveats. For the *meto*, identities are in constant gender flux depending on one's reference point, so one can't be rigid about binary boundaries.

For example, although female goes with inside – domestic space, and male goes with outside – public space, that division doesn't hold still. Within the traditional round "female" house, space is further divided symbolically into male and female space. Or take another example. From the perspective of Dina's brother, Dina's daughters and sons are considered descendants of the female line, whereas his own children are of the male line. But, from the perspective of Dina's children, they are no longer of the same line; her sons are of the male line and her daughters are of the female line. Another thing to watch out for is the assumption that all binaries are gendered. Trees, for example, appear to be exempt from gendering. And I'm just asking for unnecessary confusion if I assume male goes with raw or wild, or that the male/female dichotomy assumes a subject/object dichotomy. This is the point Strathern makes in her article, "No nature, no culture," when she deconstructs the nature/culture dichotomy that some anthropologists have read – and written – into non-Western societies.

DIANNE: So where do you want to go with this?

KAREN: What I'm working on here is trying to understand the gendered constructions of space and divisions of labor among the farmers of North Mollo. What I come up with is that none of the divisions are rigid. There seems to be a kind of built-in contingency when it comes to engendering roles and space that, I think, is operable among resisters to the mining, but I haven't yet been able to articulate it.

SANDRA: OK, let's think a moment about the gendered identity of Naususu. This was invoked to fan the flames of indignation and to move people to resist the mining. This worked because the damage done by the marble mining was not merely environmental.

As the powerfully metaphorical language of implied rape and murder suggest, it can also be understood as violence against a mother.

KAREN: As I pointed out in the play, changes in land use on and near Naususu over the years complicate an understanding of gendered space. Ritual sites at Naususu, and the racetrack that was once beside it, are socially male spaces. That's not to say the rock's identity as a nursing mother disappeared, but neither was it highlighted. The mining has been the occasion to reassert the gendered nature of Naususu. Throughout the conflict, I seldom heard the highly emotive language of Naususu being raped. This suggests it was a selectively used tactical weapon of the opposition. I'm not sure how widespread or popular that rhetoric was in the resistance. What I find problematic about it is the suggestion that women must be protected by men. I would argue that this, in turn, contributes to a sexist interpretation of gendered space and reproduction of a social order where women are subordinate.

DIANNE: I've been thinking about the various ways women participated in the resistance. In the play we hear women who have set up their own communication network, but they are also runners along with men in the semi-underground *lulbas* group. We also meet Ana, this young fireball organizer; we hear about a kind of spiritual revolt instigated through these Prayer Groups in which women seem to have significant influence; and we witness ways women keep alive a discourse and ethos of resistance simply through their conversations.

KAREN: I would add, because I think it significant, that these conversations occur around a kitchen fire. The kitchen, woman's space, is clearly a space for the exchange of useful information and strategizing. In that sense it is learning space. Not only is it

helpful to consider which issues get discussed in which spaces, but also how space influences the ways issues are discussed. The scary stories I heard about murder and dumping corpses in forests, and curses, all those were told around the kitchen fire. But that was also the space for great creativity. There was one local teacher named Enos who came up with the idea for a protest banner that, unfortunately, was never realized, but the words for the banner were wonderful: "Don't Break the Earth and Everything in It." Well, Enos's inspiration for the banner came from conversations around the fire in Maria's kitchen. As a space of intimacy and security the kitchen makes certain kinds of learning possible.

DONALD: Have you anything to add about women's participation in the resistance?

KAREN: It's worth noting that Ana, the most prominent resistance organizer, is the only one who seems able to bring together the disparate *amaf-amaf*. Traditionally that is an important function of the king. Women are also involved in the inter-village network of *lulbas* that Ana organizes. They move back and forth between villages, work alongside men, stay up all night. Some of these women are even recognized as *amaf*, another traditionally male political role. Women may still have been the ones who did most of the cooking during the sit-ins at Naususu, but men had to help get food and carry water more than they would have at home. So there are moments of pro-active resistance, like the sit-ins and demonstrations, when traditional gendered roles and divisions of labor are blurred.

But, as with the language about the rape of Naususu, there is another incident where the discourse of resistance reproduces a sexist social order. At one point during the last sit-in, women took the initiative to lead a mass of people across the field at Anjaf-

Naususu to confront the *Bupati* directly, turning the sit-in into a demonstration. How do we interpret this? On the one hand we may applaud the women's courage and assertive action, but on the other, their action symbolically reproduces their subordination. That women rather than men are the ones to first face the *Bupati* sends a message that the *Bupati* is considered so insignificant and contemptible an opponent that his resisters don't even bother to send out their male warriors to confront him. This move to humiliate the *Bupati* works because of its symbolic power that assumes women to be weaker than men. The success of this action rests on, and so reproduces, a hierarchy in which women's social and political status is considered to be lower than men's.

DIANNE: Putting the women out front may also have been an indirect way of invoking the gendered identity of Naususu. Naususu is identified as a woman, so it is the women the *Bupati* must face. But, yes, I understand what you say about the gendered identity of the rock reinforcing gender stereotypes.

SANDRA: So we've come up against the challenges of interpretation. What do we permit ourselves to see and privilege when we consider the gendered aspects of this case? It's not hard to identify a number of concrete instances where women crossed traditional boundaries of gender, acting on their own behalf and that of their families and community in new ways. But are we also able to point out that the political clout women have comes precisely from their fulfilling traditional roles around the fireplace and highlighting, even making a caricature of, their role as nurturers? Both men and women draw on traditional interpretations of women as the weaker, nurturing sex, and in a context of resistance that works. In fact, traditional assumptions about sexuality are an

effective and valuable tool of resistance to the mining. A feminist critique must ask all these questions; it demands an interpretation able to see things as both/and.

KAREN: Part of the dilemma for me is that I have valorized indigenous identity over gendered identity because that's the position resisters themselves took. The protesters coalesce around male narratives and male-dominated constructions of identity to resist perceived threats to their indigenous identity. Although women participate in the resistance in important ways, the resistance has been constructed as an indigenous people's movement, not a women's movement. So yes, there are questions about competing identities. Does resistance to outside interventions based on indigenous identity reproduce injustices within the matrix of that indigenous identity? I would have to say the answer is yes and no.

(*Karen stretches.*) What you have said has helped me a lot. What do you say to a 15 minute break? We can reconvene for a few closing comments and still be done before noon, I think.

DONALD: Sounds good. I just need to make some quick calls. How about you two?

SANDRA: I blocked off the morning, so that's fine with me.

DIANNE: I'd like to ask that we shorten the break to 10 minutes. I have another engagement at noon, so would appreciate it if we can move things along.

KAREN: 10 minutes it is. (*Everyone but Karen gets up and leaves the room, passing Ghost in the doorway. Ghost enters the room leading a very old and blind woman by the hand. Karen, who's in the corner refilling her mug, does not notice them right away. Turning around she is a bit startled.*) Good timing Ghost, we're just taking a 10 minute

break. I'd about given up on seeing you again today. Thanks for coming back, but this shouldn't take much longer. Who's your friend?

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: Well, I went home to microfiche, got some friends there to help me, and wonder of wonders…I found her in the archives.

KAREN (*Karen shrugs, looks puzzled*): Yes?

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: What's the matter? Don't you recognize her? No, I suppose you wouldn't. I must say you mortals of the 21st century have some real perception issues you need to look at, but therein lies a conundrum. *Ibu* Karen, allow me to introduce the original *Nenek* Nau of North Mollo. *Nenek* Nau, my sometimes master, sometimes friend, *Ibu* Karen.

KAREN: Aduh! (*almost dropping her mug of tea*). *Nenek Nau, beta minta ampun. Sonde tahu sama sekali. Kalau beta tahu nenek mau ke sini, beta akan siap terima. Maaf sekali, ya?* [Nenek Nau, forgive me. I didn't know at all. If I knew you wanted to come here, I would have prepared to receive you properly. I'm very sorry.]

GHOST OF UNI. PAST: At best she can just barely hear you; she can't see you at all which is why I keep holding her hand. But she can still weave, I mean she can really weave. We brought her loom; I left it downstairs.

KAREN: Her loom, huh? Ghost, you can really be sweet sometimes. I appreciate your effort, but I don't know if there'll be time for a weaving demonstration. What would be really great would be if we could just sit and talk with *Nenek* Nau, but that won't work either if she can't hear. Give me some time to think about it, OK? Please, have a seat and I'll get her something to drink. I should be able to figure out something. This is just such an unexpected delight. (*Karen goes to the table to prepare a mug of tea, while*

Ghost leads Nenek Nau to the end of the table where they settle themselves in chairs. As Karen is bringing the tea to Nenek Nau, lights fade out.)

Scene II: *Nenek* Nau's Story

[A small spot of light comes up on center stage that is no longer a university conference room. *Nenek* Nau sits very erectly on a woven mat on the floor in a circle of light, her legs straight in front of her, feet pressed against a smooth pole held in place by two pegs. Strapped into a weaving loom, she leans back against a piece of stiff leather held in place across her lower back by tough vines that come around her waist on either side to attach to the frame that lies in her lap and down her thighs. She slides a shuttle of weft threads back and forth between the dull white warp threads stretched across the frame, without looking, without seeing. Her white hair is pulled in a bun on top of her head, but she occasionally brushes away some of the many loose strands that frame her wrinkled face. She hums quietly to herself. As Dianne, Sandra, and Donald enter from stage right, the spot on *Nenek* Nau fades and a larger wash comes up on center stage to reveal the same four high stools as in the previous acts situated several feet behind where *Nenek* Nau, now unseen, continues to weave.]

DONALD (*speaking into his hand phone*): Right, OK, that sounds fine. No, I can't make it before 2 this afternoon. So, will you call Phil about the change? OK, thanks. Talk to you later. (*Donald sticks his phone back in his pocket.*)

SANDRA: Sorry, I know we just got up to stretch, but I need to rest my ankle, just for a moment (*Sandra, Dianne, and Donald sit on the stools*). I somehow twisted it this morning when I walked my dog. I put ice on it right away and there wasn't much swelling, but it's beginning to throb.

DIANNE: You don't want to hassle with a swollen ankle. Best you stay off it a day or two. I myself hope to take in a sugar shack or two while I'm in the area. Haven't been to one in several years.

DONALD: Any you'd recommend, Sandra? I think I was last at one, two maybe three years ago.

DIANNE *holding up her hand*): Shh. Sorry Donald, but did you hear that?

(*Nenek Nau's humming gets louder*)

SANDRA: You know what? I don't know where we are. (*Looking around*) It's very odd; I don't see any campus buildings.

[Lights fade to low on the stools and the spot is brought up full on *Nenek* Nau who continues to weave as she narrates.]

***NENEK* NAU**: So many things, so very many things I have seen from my rock, at my feet and beyond. From the depths of my heart, I love the Mollo region so much. In all of Timor there is no region as lovely as Mollo. That's what is most basic for me. If we don't seize this beauty, it will disappear in a moment. There's one place that is the most beautiful to me. If we go from Fatumnasi and return to Soe, and if it's the rainy season, but the rain has stopped, that's when the fog rests on top of the casuarina trees. (*Nenek stops her weaving to hold her hands, palms down, up in the air, slowly lowering them like fog above treetops.*) That's coming from Fatumnasi and approaching Telputih. And there it is just breathtaking. Second is the branch on the road between Totmenas to Lelobatan, where you can reach Mount Monas, and from the top of Mount Monas the view is so lovely to me; it is one of my favorite spots. People may be rich, but their wealth cannot compare to the beauty of my home. And this is my pride.

(*Nau resumes her weaving.*) It'd be better if those outside the country didn't come to do their works, but came to study from this region, because the beauty is already here. The government's Forestry Department has claimed all this land as its own. I deeply regret this. And what I see is that among the people of Mollo, both those who have a college degree and those who don't, there is no one now to move to protest the mining. I've heard the horn of the trucks very early in the morning as they carry the rock from my home to Kupang, and the sound is like the Kalimutu ship's bell when it is ready to leave Tenau Harbor for Java. And when I hear that sound, my heart is very sick because I remember that it carries the beauty of Mollo away.

I once met a grade school teacher, *Bapak* Lot Bena, at the side of the road and I said, "Aduh! Just listen to that truck's bell, it's just like Kalimutu's leaving Tenau. That's a marble vehicle. It's a pity. And what do we get?" Then this man said, "Ee-ya, it makes me feel ashamed." That's what convinced me there were people unhappy about the mining. And I realized it wasn't just one man, but many who didn't want the mining, but didn't know what to do about it. So I planted a soul magnet in Ana and that's when she began to take action, looking for *amaf-amaf* and others to join with her.

According to *adat*, women are not allowed to go out and join with others. But when people saw that Ana would return home at two o'clock in the morning, that she would walk miles and miles with men and boys, then people began to see that having women walk together with men was not a problem. She could leave her husband, her child, she could walk with another person's husband, another person's child, but that was not a problem.

When it came time for an action, at first I expected men and only a few women to show up because it is hard for women to leave their work at home. I followed Ana into the villages when she would approach the elders, and there the ones who protested more were the women. And when the women were asked why they had to protest they said, "The men may sell Naususu, but the difficulties don't affect just one person. When the rains fall without ceasing, that affects us women because we are the ones who cook. The wood is always wet, it smokes badly (*Nenek Nau rubs her eyes as if bothered by smoke*), that makes things hard on us. The rains don't stop, how are we to go out and find food to eat? The men, they just go out to the fields and come back and what they know is that there's food to eat. But to think about what there is to cook, that's for us in the household."

Also when there was the demonstration action at my rock, there were more women who came than men. And during that period were women who didn't want to go home, but who slept in the forest. Mama Rut, Mama Mina, Ester, Serly, also several women from Kolon and Ajaobaki and they took turns camping close at my feet. That's how they realized they could live in the midst of men in the forest. And at night the women would look for each other so they could sleep together or find their families. Everyone did this except for Ana who would sleep by anyone at any time she felt tired. She told me it was a way of showing that women are not just sex objects.

Ana now has a baby and she carries that baby with her to meetings in the villages to convince women in the villages that they may have young children, but it doesn't mean they can't do anything. They may have work in the kitchen, they may have babies, but

they also have the ability to leave their homes because they all have the same right to do something outside their homes.

Traditionally, if men and women left their villages to go to war, they knew they could not commit sexual sins because if they did, then the bullets would make them a target. If people went out to struggle, they recognized one mother, one father, and everyone else was a brother and sister. It was this traditional history that strengthened the women who camped out in the forest. They knew no one would want to do something that would sacrifice the struggle. And they slept together in the woods to show their concern for nature.

Who would want to go and sleep there? They ate off banana leaves. There were no vegetables, only old cassava leaves full of holes that no one else had any use for. But because they truly love nature so much they did these things. And late at night they would enjoy my beauty, and even more at the break of dawn they would wake and look at me, my rock, like a sleeping cat who is for a moment waiting, maybe looking for food. What more if in the early dawn the mist has settled on my peak, my rock is certainly very beautiful. The people when they gathered knew that many of my creatures had fled. So early in the morning they would wake up and call, trying to coax the animals to come back. (*Nenek Nau cups her hands around her mouth, making soft coo-like sounds.*)

So remarkably did they show their love for nature around my feet because they look at me and see early in the morning that I am shaped like a round house. And they know that I gather together the mother's milk; all the wealth of the region is gathered together in me. I am like the rice barn where they store all the produce from their harvests. I am not owned by any one clan – not the Kune clan, nor the Baun clan, nor the

Tulle clan. I am the fortress, the place of promises, the gate to pass to reach the King's palace in Netpala.

After months of preparation, more than a thousand protesters began their sit-in at my feet. Let's see, that was in July 2000. Some of them went to the Governor in Kupang who promised he would withdraw the mining company's permit to mine me by August of that year. However, by August there was no indication that the permit had been withdrawn so that the protesters began to feel restless. It was before fence-building season that year when a large group of government officials showed up, and I witnessed one of the most heated confrontations of many, many years. These officials had not come to resolve the problem, but to try to get the two sides to make peace with each other. They had prepared the supporters of the mining to stand-by in Fatukoto on my south side, while the officials arrived in their cars along the road that runs along the north side of me where the protesters were camping. The officials arrived at noon, just as the protesters were eating lunch, so the protesters asked the officials to wait until they were done eating. I really got a chuckle out of them turning the tables on the officials like that. (*Nenek Nau covers her mouth as she laughs to herself.*) Ask any of the farmers around here, they'll tell you how they are made to wait for hours and hours before a government official, even a lower ranked one, will meet with them. Well, this time, the officials were far from their offices and had come to call at the office of my people.

Now the people were feeling very disgusted. After camping out at my feet for more than a month, there was still no evidence that the mining company was going to withdraw and the government was still trying to take a reconciliation approach between the two sides. So, after eating lunch the women spontaneously took machetes and began

to cut large branches from trees, one for each woman, because they saw that all the soldiers present were carrying rifles. There were 30 fully armed soldiers present, one platoon, more than I've ever seen to gather against civilians, except maybe during the Communist raids in the mid-60s. Some of the soldiers were Timorese, some were Javanese. And I heard a soldier ask one of the women, "*Ibu*, why are you taking this wood?" And she said, "*Bapak*, you are holding a weapon. I am also preparing a weapon." So the women finished cutting the thick branches, like clubs, and each woman had one. The women began to organize themselves. They selected a young woman to lead them. The young men present did the same thing, they chose one of their members to lead their group. And *Amaf* Toto, he appointed himself to lead a group of elders whose hair had begun to turn gray.

When the government officials stood up, the people organized themselves into marching lines to approach them. The women were in front, the young men brought up the rear, and the elders were in the middle as they marched together toward the location. So they advanced together towards the company's buildings close at my feet, ready to fight. They shouted, "*I hai faut kanaf. Haim tita! Haim tita!*" ["This is our name rock. We reject! We reject! You must leave! You must leave!"] The name rock they protest is my child, Anjaf. Anjaf is the name rock for the Fuakane and Toto families. As they marched, they shouted. The women shouted and the men would answer. When they reached the officials, the *Bupati* ordered Ana to list the *amaf* who would enter the building to talk to the officials. So, 10 elders entered one of the mining buildings to meet with the *Bupati* and the others who were gathered there. 10 men went inside, Ana stayed at the door, and all the others waited outside. And in the middle of the conversation the

Bupati ordered the protesters back outside because they and the pro-mining supporters were ready to attack each other.

Those opposed to the mining were given 15 minutes outside the building to discuss their position. They were being pressured to "make peace." But they said, "We will not make peace with anyone or any party if there is no clear withdrawal of the mining permit. We reject your insisting that this is a family feud. What we are angry about is the destruction of our rock. That's the problem. This is not a problem between the *amaf* and *nemnuke*."

Now when these elders came out to meet with the people, the *Bupati* was close on their heels and I saw him nudge the soldiers' commander and whisper to him, "Begin. Take action. You want to shoot, or just anything, go ahead." But the commander ignored him. By then the *adat* rituals had begun to take effect on the soldiers. While the people were eating lunch, six protesters went off all at the same time to conduct rituals, but in different locations. So that's what happened. The spirits closed the hearts and eyes of the soldiers from doing anything.

(*Nau stops weaving.*) When that failed the *Bupati* tried a middle road. "No one has rights to this rock except for me, the *Bupati*. The land, water, rocks, the very dirt and all its contents is controlled and owned by the government. The government will handle it. Absolutely no one will resist. If they resist, I will arrest them. And no one can deny the decision that I have made. Disperse this instant. The investor may not stop working. Mining activities must continue."

There were about 50 pro-mining supporters there and they broke into cheers, shouting, "We've won! We've won!" (*Nau shakes a fist in the air.*) But then Selmus

Oematan jumped up on a pile of sand and ordered the protesting masses: "Be quiet. Listen. I am going to strangle the *Bupati* and you watch. And when I strangle him, turn them into powder." Selmus then hopped down from the sand, took four broad strides up to the *Bupati*, and grabbed him by the throat. And that's what gave the mass of protesters the courage to move.

The women were first and they took their clubs and went face to face with the soldiers and pushed against their rifles. (*Nenek Nau pantomimes pushing against a soldier with a large club.*) And the soldiers did not oppose them. Probably they secretly agreed with the protesters. I don't know. I just know it was a blessing that the soldiers did not open fire on the protesters who started cursing and swearing all sorts of things at the *Bupati*. They cursed his genitals, his underwear saying they had bought it and that it wasn't his to wear (*she starts giggling again, her hand over her mouth*), others said he was sitting on an empty throne, others cursed the taxes they'd paid him. Some cursed him in *Uab Meto* and others in Indonesian, but what was really funny were the ones who didn't know Indonesian, but tried to curse him in Indonesian. They made some ridiculous statements. So the women were the ones who began the yelling and cursing, and then the men followed, ready to hit if need be. And when this happened, the pro-mining supporters ran off in company cars and the protesters began stoning the cars and it was a real mess. The soldiers stood off to one side and didn't try to intervene. It was very frightening, but the women were very brave. Soon afterwards, a few farmers returned to set fire to all the mining buildings. Several months later, the farmers came again, this time with Ana and some others, to build a *lopo* where farmers could gather. And then one morning I woke up to find several talismans erected during the night to

ward off evil spirits and others who would do me harm. It feels good to have the people do what they can to protect me.

And that, *nitu* of the earth, is the story I have to tell you today." (*With that Nenek Nau pats the earth with the palms of her hands, readjusts the strap across her back, and then resumes her weaving, humming quietly to herself.*) [Lights fade out, curtains fall.]

CHAPTER 5

RECOGNITION, REHEARSAL, AND RECIPROCITY: THE 3 "R"S OF MOLLO RESISTANCE

> In any development project, it is obvious what should be developed. It is also certain that other changes will take place. On the strength of functionalist theories, there is general acceptance that further consequences – possibly even ones seen as causally linked – will result from development. But whether these transformations portend an overall improvement for the population is certainly, in most cases at least, completely uncertain. It is often not recognized in advance that such a transformation will also affect a symbolic classification. Because of the imbalance that this kind of transformation creates, "deformation through discontinuity" is a better description than "development."
>
> Schulte Nordholt (1971), writing about a plan in 1946 to mechanically plow a huge grassy plain in Central Timor

A key assumption of development is that particular people and places are tabula rasa for the inscription of modernity. The story of Anjaf-Naususu shows how this assumption leads to violence or "developmental genocide" (Gedicks, 2001, p. 16).[204] Despite possibilities for reform in Indonesia, the grim reality of the past few years

---

[204] The range of Indonesian literature that claims to critique development includes a concern with the failures of development, e.g., that development does not adequately attend to social-cultural issues. Therefore, potential resources have not yet been fully developed for people's welfare (Poerwanto, 2000; compare with Kamat, 2000: "Development remains the categorical priority in this literature, which attends to culture as an important aspect of development" p. 113). Other literature, particularly critical of how development was deployed during Suharto's regime, suggests that democratic reforms can put development back on track (Mardimin, 1996; Mahfud, Hamid, Suparman, & Parsetyo, 1997; Baswir, Hudiyanto, Andriono, Aditya, & Sambodo, 1999; Effendi, 2000). But my review of literature found little that offers a sustained critique of capitalism, or, as Kamat (2002) calls it, the basic contradiction of development, namely that it seeks the accumulation of wealth (the state must safeguard the vested interests of capitalists) while at the same time claiming to uphold democratic ideals of egalitarianism. A few hopeful signs that this more radical perspective exists include essays in *Atas nama pembangunan* [In the name of development] (ELSAM, 1995), proceedings of the 10th INFID (International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development) conference that argue strongly for radical agrarian and land reform (Fauzi, 1997b), and the Indonesian translation of *The Violence of Development* (Schrijvers, 2000). Although there is no explicit discussion of development per se, the violent impacts of development for indigenous peoples is also clear in the proceedings from the First Congress of Indigenous Peoples in Indonesia (Kartika & Gautama, 1999). In his book on the military's involvement in the Indonesian economy, Iswandi (1998) links development to violence when he compares old European fascism with neo-fascism or what he calls development fascism.

suggests that, as far as development is concerned, it is business as usual.[205] Development projects that destroy local environments, cultures, and worldviews are backed by individuals and institutions who do not hesitate to use coercive measures to protect the complex of political and economic interests tied to these projects. The violence of development practices is embedded in a discursive violence that insists on the embodiment of particular constructions of modernity as the sole standard bearer for what it means to be fully human. The Indonesian development discourse that flourished during Suharto's New Order and continues to insinuate itself into the public imagination suffers no shortage of terms to stigmatize those situated at the margins of the state's mechanisms of order and control.[206] The Indonesian lexicon has a host of expressions that define *masyarakat adat* and their communities as sub-standard, underdeveloped, or otherwise lacking. They are *orang terisolir* and *desa tertinggal* (isolated people, villages left behind), *orang primitif* (primitive people), *orang kuno* (ancient people), *orang terbelakang* and *suku-suku terasing* (backward people and backward tribes, this includes communities that hunt and gather). Perhaps most persistently they are *raskin* (poor families, not limited to, but inclusive of, *masyarakat adat*).[207]

---

[205] Consider, for example, the recent surrender of a marble rock in East Mollo, TTS by a family there to a mining company. An elder in the family explains they surrender the rock because they do not have the skills to turn the rock into marble, but that the riches made from it will be used for the welfare of future generations in the village. Head of the mining company said he was proud of the trust shown the company by the people and the family surrendering the rock, and that he was convinced God had blessed them with peace to finish the work that had been planned ("Penambangan marmer," 2002).

[206] "Under Suharto's New Order, however, such groups [shifting cultivators such as the Meratus Dayaks] have quietly become icons of the archaic disorder that represents the limit and test of state order and development" (Tsing, 1993, p. 28).

[207] Kamat (2000) writes, "...the introduction of capital [is seen] as the solution to the vexing problem of primitive social relations in the Third World" (p. 58). I have long been troubled by the imprecise opposition of democracy vs. communism that I grew up with in the US. This comparison that confuses a political system with an economic system is repeated, in reverse, by development theories that

As Kamat (2000) illustrates in a discussion of the Indian government's response to a "crisis" of bonded labor, "the development discourse ...[transposes] unequal social relations into 'needs' or deficiencies that afflict the tribal individual/community" (p. 67). Such labeling serves to erase "the social relations that produce [debilitating] conditions" and objectifies social issues so they remain safely non-political (pp. 65-66). That people, identified as un- and underdeveloped, are said to suffer from both economic and cultural deprivation targets them as objects of control, discipline, and moral regulation (Luke & Gore, 1992, citing Foucault, p. 6).

In the Anjaf-Naususu mining case, the assumption that the farmers of North Mollo need economic development with its promises of fulfillment was never questioned, not even by a majority of the resisters. A seemingly broad consensus that farmers in Mollo need help to escape the shackles of poverty may explain why the government repeatedly used a discourse of economic growth and development, not so much to justify or mitigate the irreparable ecological damage and cultural violence wreaked by the mining as to deny it was happening. If it was economic growth, how could it be harmful? If mining could launch Timor into the 21st century, how could it be criticized? At the same time the TTS government projected assumptions of need onto the "underdeveloped" farmers of Mollo, it never hesitated to proclaim its own needs. Having exhausted other sources of revenue (see Chapter 3), it now depended on mining to generate state revenue ("Realisasi PAD," 2001). The hegemonic nature of the development discourse permitted this irony in which need was used both to diminish local farmers *and* strengthen the state. "Need" was never intended to be an objective

---

promote economic growth (the economic system of capitalism) as the only alternative to feudalism (which was as much a political and social system as an economic one).

indicator of welfare, but was rather a discursive weapon used to reinforce unequal power relations between "undeveloped" farmers and a "developed" nation-state.[208]

When farmers refused "to stay within the confines of the development discourse" (Kamat, 2000, p. 75) by using their own environmental and cultural discourses to resist the mining and name its violations, government officials responded in turn with yet another discursive weapon. As one report puts it (Baun, 2001), they "terrorized the people" (p. 1) for signing letters that opposed the mining and for participating in sit-ins by calling them anarchists and members of the Indonesian Communist Party who would face life imprisonment. They further tried to frighten the protesters saying they were trying to make the Governor lose face with the investor and that the farmers would have to pay back any losses incurred by the investor and the government.[209] The government discursively violated the resisters twice, first existentially by labeling them sub-human, and then politically by labeling them subversive.

Farmers and their supporters resisted in a number of ways when confronted by ecological violence in which marble peaks were stripped of their forests and drilled into bits of commodity. Discursively their resistance was waged on at least three fronts. One discourse heavily promoted by activists from outside the area was that of environmental

---

[208] Another example of discourse as an instrument for maintaining unequal relations of power is evident in rhetoric common to Forestry Department officials. The Department's mandate to "protect the forest" is a euphemism for control of forest resources. During my field study in Lelobatan, I learned that representatives of the TTS Forestry Department had beaten farmers who had slashed and burned an area of old forest for new farm plots without consulting the Department. The Department's show of force was punishment not so much for felling trees, the Forestry Department frequently fells trees, but punishment for taking unilateral, local action that did not recognize the Department's authority over forest land. The punishment was intended to establish boundaries of authority rather than boundaries of the forest.

[209] This last threat sounds like projection on behalf of government officials who imagined they might be blamed should the mining company be forced to withdraw. As the letter of agreement states (see Appendix E, Letter of Agreement, point e. under Second Party), the local representatives are willing not to demand a stop to mining activities should there be a dispute between the two parties for the duration of the mining permit.

protection. A second one, also promoted by activists but one that relied heavily on meanings generated from within local communities, was a discourse of cultural meaning. According to this argument, Anjaf-Naususu should be off limits to mining because of its cultural and historical significance. The third argument focused on failures of the government and investor to fulfill their promises of compensation.[210] The language of this argument was that of economic democracy or what Moore (2000) calls a discourse of entitlement. This range of discursive resistance points to the nuances of violations the farmers confronted. This chapter foregrounds the epistemological, cultural, and economic violations embedded within the ecological violence of mining to make more explicit the domains of power at stake. The varied forms of resistance to ecological violence – some direct, some not, some public, others not, some discursive, others less so – can likewise be grouped as responses to these three dimensions of violation. The "3 Rs" of Mollo resistance discussed in this chapter – recognition, rehearsal, and reciprocity – describe not only strategies of resistance to this particular case of mining, but describe a

[210] A particularly interesting case along these lines has recently emerged. In 1999, residents of Tunua Village in North Mollo agreed to the mining of Naitapan, a marble peak in their village. In return, the mining company promised to build a church, a village office, several kilometers of highway, and 100 cement houses with zinc roofs (in keeping with the Indonesian development discourse these are called healthy houses in contrast to the traditional thatched huts they supposedly replace). When the mining company built only a foundation for the church and nothing more, community residents became angry and, it seems, caused the mining company to withdraw. After several months of no mining activity, community residents themselves contracted with another mining company to remove and sell marble blocks that had already been cut but left behind by the previous mining company. The plan was to divide proceeds from the marble evenly among community members. When the new mining company recently began transporting the marble, its trucks were stopped by police. The TTS government claims that the marble is still the property of the former mining company. The contestation in this case, then, is between government leaders whose interests lie with one mining company and community members whose interests lie with another. Unlike resisters to the mining of Naususu who challenged the state's development discourse with local environmental and cultural discourses, the farmers in this case use a discourse of entitlement when they struggle for a fair share of the "development" pie ("Warga Mollo Utara datangi Bupati TTS," 2002).

way of life that, when situated within a context of violence and multiple violations, reveals itself as layers of resistance.

I propose this analytic framework by way of summarizing insights gained from ongoing research in Lelobatan. At the same time, I acknowledge that to construct the frame in this way privileges a way of life that may, in fact, exist primarily as an idealized, romantic notion of resistance.[211] Insofar as I privilege and, at times, celebrate the experience of those who struggle to author their own existence, I may tend to romanticize resistance. But how is one to distinguish between romance and solidarity? Furthermore, is it not possible that those quick to dismiss the valorization of *masyarakat adat* as romanticism have a hidden agenda to invalidate perspectives that begin from the position of marginalized peoples?[212] By keeping attention focused on domains of power, I hope to discursively temper whatever tendencies toward romanticism may distract the reader. As Tania Murray Li (2000) writes, "...the concept of indigenous environmental knowledge forms a field of power within which alliances may be formed, struggles waged, claims made and rights asserted (or denied)" (p. 121). The same can be said for the other concepts explored here besides indigenous or local knowledge, such as subsistence agriculture. To situate this discussion in terms of domains of power encourages an internal as well as external analysis regarding resistance as a way of life. I begin by looking more closely at multiple positionings among the resisters themselves.

---

[211] Brosius (2000) shows how Western environmentalist representations of the environmental knowledge of Penan (East Malaysia) hunter-gatherers who resisted timber companies "imposes meanings on Penan 'knowledge' that may be quite imaginary" (p. 309).

[212] This clearly is not the case with Abu-Lughod (1990) who cautions against tendencies to romanticize resistance for how this neglects thorough investigations into relations of power. What I have in mind here are a few Indonesian activists I know who have insinuated that as a Westerner, my concern with land and human rights of *masyarakat adat* is grounded in a romantic view of them.

The "Both/And" of Resistance

Many of the local farmers and non-local supporters who resisted the mining[213] expressed anger about destruction of indigenous land and culture. Because the emotions these resisters expressed were the most intense and most frequently heard, they tended to mask resistance coming from other positions. For example, some of the resisters contested Ben's right to sell the rock, arguing he was not a legitimate son of the latest King Oematan who, in turn, could be discredited as the descendant of a Chinese proxy for the traditional line of Mollo kings.[214] It may be this argument was intended simply to buttress more basic ones about preserving the integrity of land and culture. However, it is also possible those who raised the issue were not upset about the mining of Anjaf-Naususu *per se*, only angry that Ben and not they (or some other representative more widely accepted by the farmers) got the "biggest piece of the action."

Behind the arguments about ecological and cultural abuse we discover that resistance to the mining comes from many directions. Some people resisted because their villages were not consulted (it was an affront to their status as co-"owners" of Naususu), because they had not personally received cash from the investor whereas others had (anger stemming from jealousy), or because company promises for household generators and a new roof for the church in Fatukoto proved to be empty (anger stemming from

---

[213] Non-local supporters include NGO activists as well as other individuals. A few activists tried to rally opposition among people who originated from North Mollo, but no longer lived there, such as government bureaucrats and students. Although there was never a groundswell of resistance among these non-residents, some individuals offered quiet support and encouragement to the resisters.

[214] Sem Oematan, who died in 1994, was acknowledged and well-loved by the farmers of North Mollo as their last acclaimed king even though he was a descendent of the Chinese proxy king, Lai Akun (see Chapter 2). However, when Sem's illegitimate son, Ben, hands over Naususu to a mining company, Sem's authority that was never questioned during his lifetime is now questioned posthumously to highlight his son's illegitimacy, both as political and genealogical heir. As Ong recognizes, "integrity of the past...is

deception). Had these resisters been pleased by perceived benefits received from the government or mining company, they might not have lent support to the resistance. Also, because farmers lie for strategic reasons, it was often difficult to know what the actual reasons were for a person's participation in the resistance.

One of my first clues to the multiple positionality of resisters came when I learned that one of the two "traditional leaders" who lobbied ministers in Jakarta to oppose the mining (Chapter 2), took with him several large containers of honey that he sold in Surabaya on his return trip. To some activists, including myself, his taking advantage of a paid trip to Jakarta to enhance his own honey business called into question his commitment to "the cause." In a "holy war" there are no spoils or profit, yet it seemed this man lacked ritual purity. He had exploited communal opposition to the mining, which for some included resistance to the hegemony of a capitalist economic order, to make a profit from that very economic system. Doubt about his commitment increased when, upon his return from Jakarta, this man disappeared for several months, removing himself from those who continued to resist the mining. This man both resisted when, as community representative, he lobbied in Jakarta and did not resist (the broader issue of capitalism) when he piggy-backed the selling of private honey on his trip to Jakarta. On several occasions, ambiguous motives for resistance was the topic of concerned discussion among some activists who wanted to keep the movement "pure" and insure that *masyarakat adat* were resisting for the "right" reasons so they would not be vulnerable to selling out to mining interests if the price were right. Others, however, seemed more interested in coalescing disparate groups unhappy about the mining, no

---

subordinate to integrity of the present" (p. 48). In this case it is not integrity of the past that shifts so much as how it is interpreted.

matter their reasons. For these organizers, it is not impossible to imagine an alliance between farmers and miners had any of the miners ever been unhappy enough about low wages or lack of medical insurance to protest.

Ana (personal interview, August 17, 2002) divides women who participated in the month-long sit-in and demonstrations at the foot of Anjaf-Nausus into four groups based on their different motives for resisting. One group participated more or less spontaneously because of the spirit of the moment. They wanted to be part of an exciting and large community event. A second group was driven by a sense of competition, a desire to prove to themselves, to Ana, and to the men that they too had the ability to protest. Here, Ana holds herself up as a role model, saying that many women would look at her and ask themselves, "How is it that this young woman can organize men, organize the people to go out and fight, and we in the villages can't?" For some women this comparison and self-interrogation became the impetus for them to get involved. A third group lacked courage and conviction. They did not participate on their own initiative, but were coaxed or even forced by someone else to go to join the demonstrators. The fourth and, Ana implied, largest group was comprised of those genuinely concerned about the impact of the mining on their lives, individually and communally. Ana identified the women in this group as the ones who "really love *alam*."[215] From a distance, all the women at the demonstration appear to protest the mining, but when seen up close, "both/and" positions can be discerned – the women involved both protested the mining and competed with other activist women or complied with pressures by the opposition to join the protest.

[215] To translate *alam* simply as nature is to miss the connotation of holiness it often carries, as it does here.

A further dimension of women's both/and position has to do with the positioning of gender in the resistance. As pointed out in the play, Ana fulfilled some functions of a traditional king by effectively bringing together the *amaf-amaf*. Yet she did not hesitate to invoke the gendered identity of Naususu as the breast of West Timor, a powerful image that metaphorically draws on and so reproduces Timorese female identity as nurturing mother who requires strong men to protect her. Some women resisters were both challenging traditional gender roles and reproducing them.

Another instance of a "both/and" position among protesters is reflected in the different spiritual orientations of those who made prayers of resistance. Whereas some prayed traditional prayers, complete with sacrificial chickens and calls to the ancestors, others were arguably at the opposite end of the spectrum, joining in charismatic Christian prayer groups to seek guidance in carrying out the Lord's will. Interestingly it is charismatic Christians who are usually vocal about the need to destroy heathen practices of traditional spirituality and who seek to "convert" farmers from their syncretic practices and participate in the charismatics' rigid interpretation of Christian discipline. As it was, prayer groups were sufficiently distracted by the need to save miners from themselves and Naususu from destruction that they could not police those who were reading chicken entrails with the same ends in mind. As this case revealed, these prayer groups, with their express beliefs in satanic powers, actually have more in common with traditional beliefs, including a spiritual attachment to Anjaf-Naususu, than do the more liberal members of Protestant churches throughout the region. This may account for the fact that the only explicitly Christian groups that sought an end to the mining, albeit on their own

terms, were a few charismatic prayer groups and not mainline churches.[216] Similarly opposed to the mining, the prayer groups and the tribal elders who prayed can be seen as coming together to resist, both with traditional prayers and charismatic ones.

When the analytic gaze looks outward from the "inside" perspective of resisters, what we see is encroachment by outside investors and state agents who dominate the physical and economic space of a culturally charged site in North Mollo. The resisters face global capitalism mediated by a discourse of Indonesian national development as it trickles down through the channels of government bureaucracy. The struggle to resist is conducted both in public domains of male power and space and, through family discussions, also in domestic, female space such as Maria's kitchen. Discourses that evolved in separate gendered "space" converge at crucial moments such as during secret strategy meetings or sit-ins to present unified resistance to the mining. However, when the analytic lens turns inward, the dynamics of injustice shift and a number of internal fissures that cut along lines of gender, religious, property, age, and ethnic differences suggest that the formation of oppositional consciousness followed a wide range of vectors. For the most part, resistance to the mining, centered as it was on injustices stemming from outside intervention, did not expose aspects of social relations within communities of North Mollo that contribute to less obvious injustices, e.g., gender injustice.[217] Although it is possible the prominent role of some women in the resistance

---

[216] After I left the field, I learned of one ritual prayer interpreted by the resisters as pivotal in the resistance struggle. When they prayed for the rain to stop as a sign their resistance was not in vain, the rain immediately stopped. A pastor from the one Protestant church in Kapan was present at this ceremony, but it was the only time he gave any sign of support to their resisters.

[217] I say less obvious, but only in the sense of analyzing this particular case. There are plenty of historical and contemporary accounts of structural violence against women, but these were never foregrounded by the resisters since the clear and present danger was the presence of the mining company, not patriarchy *per se*. It is interesting to note the double-edged nature of this position, however. The

may eventually contribute to a local movement for gender justice, there is no "natural" link that weds a movement for indigenous rights with one for women's rights. Revitalization of *adat* may be the best hope to strengthen local communities in battles they must fight in the public domain. Yet, other issues and injustices internal to these communities that a revitalization of *adat* may ignore or even exacerbate will need to be addressed before, in fact, they realize themselves to be strong and healthy communities.

Recognition as Resistance to Epistemological Violation

The variety of names and typologies used in theorizing local knowledge suggests it has been a burgeoning field of cross-disciplinary study for at least two decades.[218] Banuri and Apffel Marglin (1993) contrast modern knowledge that views nature instrumentally to non-modern knowledge that holds a sacred view of nature. Richards (1993) warns of the confusion that arises when indigenous technical knowledge is understood as planned design rather than a "patch-and-mend philosophy" of performance (p. 70) able to adjust to unpredictable conditions and allowing farmers to cope successfully with the difficulties they face. Performance skills (coping strategies) such as experimentation and improvisation belie the "intellectualization of peasant thought as a fully specified 'local knowledge system'" (p. 75). Murdoch and Clark (1994) seek to move beyond "scientific solutions which focus solely upon the 'natural' world and social

---

resisters, at times, protested the "patriarchal" nature of the mining for its attack on the "nursing mother," Naususu. This suggests that violence to women by outsiders is not tolerable, while violence by Mollo men towards Mollo women is.

[218] I choose the term local knowledge over other choices (e.g., indigenous knowledge, folk knowledge, popular knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge, embedded knowledge) for its clarity in linking knowledge to specific physical, social, and cultural contexts. Distinctions are, then, first and foremost constructed according to place rather than according to ethnicity, gender, class, degrees of development, etc. Hornborg (1996) makes a similar choice with the use of the term 'contextualist' as a stance that counters the decontextualizing character of modernity. This is confirmed by the central role of territory in Mollo identity.

scientific solutions which focus solely upon the 'social' world" (p. 130) by stressing that knowledge is heterogenous. They argue that sustainable knowledge must be hybrid knowledge, "a mixture of the social, the scientific, the local, the technical, the natural, and perhaps even the magical – that refuses *a priori* to privilege science" (p. 129). For Parkes (2000) *indigent knowledge* is comprised of the vested interests of development agencies in representing local knowledge, whereas indigenous people engaged in resistance draw on *indignant knowledge*.

Some discussions of local knowledge reflect the subtle dominance of positivism over more holistic characterizations. Reductive representations of local knowledge that focus on specific, pragmatic, often agricultural things that actors know eschew the need for in-depth ethnographic study (Vayda, Walters, & Setyawati, in press). Those who promote the cataloguing of knowledge about indigenous plants, often in the name of conserving indigenous knowledge, reflect these more applied approaches to local knowledge.[219] That issues are studied on the basis of their relevance to economic development and environmental conservation initiatives reflects the modernist bias of such an orientation. The problem with this approach to local knowledge is that it elides issues of power and local interpretive and ethical frameworks relevant to them. My research in Lelobatan confirmed that it is not enough to study the content and forms of local knowledge. Questions about social relations and meaning as they relate to domains of power must also be addressed. To deepen an understanding of local knowledge that assumes neither generic nor universal characteristics requires that relations of power within any given context are made explicit.

---

[219] Agrawal and commentators (1998) explore the debate regarding the *ex situ* archiving of *in situ* information.

The relationship of power to knowledge is informed by debates about whether or not the content of local or indigenous knowledge is essentially different from other kinds of knowledge. Agrawal (1998) argues that what differentiates local knowledge is not its content, but its politicized nature: "...the criterion of power will triumph when local, traditional, or practical knowledge is contrasted with global, modern, or theoretical knowledge. To this extent, and only to this extent, the attention to 'indigenous'...and the attempts to direct resources toward the 'indigenous' can and must be welcomed" (p. 42). Li (2000) concurs. She says the distinctive feature of 'indigenous environmental knowledge' is not epistemological but has to do with its location "in the course of struggles over rights to territories, resources and cultural respect" (p. 121). Baviskar (2000) too says claims to indigenous knowledge are "an assertion of the political and symbolic autonomy of the community from the state" (p. 117).[220] I agree with these insights about the politically charged nature of the local/indigenous knowledge discourse, but disagree that there is no epistemic difference distinguishing these knowledges. In so far as they belong to primary oral cultures, there is indeed an epistemological distinction to be made as Ong (1982) has so clearly shown in his study of orality and literacy. In his chapter on the psycho-dynamics of orality, Ong contrasts orality, where words are primarily sounds without visual signifiers, to literacy, where words are not restricted to sound. Whereas the visual ideal is to differentiate for the sake of clarity and distinctness,

[220] This emphasis on the political positionality of indigenous knowledge is not unlike what some feminists have developed. Alcoff (1994) suggests positionality as a third way for feminist theory that avoids the pitfalls of both the essentialism of cultural feminism and the undecidability of post-structuralism – "Woman is a position from which a feminist politics can emerge rather than a set of attributes that are 'objectively identifiable.' Seen in this way, being a 'woman' is to take up a position within a moving historical context and to be able to choose what we make of this position and how we alter this context" (p. 117). Similarly it is useful to approach indigenous identity, including indigenous knowledge, as a position from which an indigenous politics can emerge rather than a set of attributes.

the auditory ideal of harmony moves in an opposite direction by combining sounds – sight is a dissecting sense, sound a unifying one. Literacy is object oriented, orality is word oriented.[221] He goes on to identify a number of distinctive features that describe how experience is intellectually organized in primary oral cultures: thought tends to be additive rather than subordinative, aggregative rather than analytic, redundant, agonistically toned, homeostatic, etc.

Of the many characteristics Ong sets forth, three in particular are instructive here. In oral cultures where writing is absent, knowledge cannot be separated or structured at a distance from lived experience but exists in relation to actions in the human lifeworld.[222] Oral cultures have nothing equivalent to lists, facts, or "how-to" manuals unless they are embedded in genealogies that describe human relations or accounts of human actions. Secondly, knowledge shaped by orality is empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced. In oral cultures, knowing means the achievement of close and communal identification with the known. It neither separates the knower from the known as writing does, nor does it privilege a knowing individual subject over a knowing community. An example might be the way in which story-telling transports listeners into

---

[221] Curses rely on the power of speech and, as such, have efficacy in oral cultures rather than literate ones. The primacy of orality in local understandings of power became clear one morning when I asked Papa Tius, a master of oratory, to what he attributed his leadership charisma. Without hesitation he replied, "Language." He explained that from an early age he learned the power of effective speaking and so made an intentional effort to cultivate it. A truly indigenous Mollo education would, no doubt, give a prominent place to rhetoric. The once valorized position of oratory in Indonesian education has, perhaps, diminished as Indonesians have become increasingly literate.

[222] Banuri and Appfel Marglin (1993) make a similar point when they describe traditional knowledge systems as being "embedded in the social, cultural and moral milieu of their particular community" where actions and thoughts have a wide range of implications, including moral and cosmological ones (p. 11). Interpreting "natural" phenomena in terms of the human lifeworld reflects the relational nature of *meto* epistemology. E.g., some resisters claimed that the exceptionally heavy, long rainy season following the initiation of mining was punishment because the people had failed to stop the mining.

the story and allows them to identify with the characters of the tale. Thirdly, knowledge in oral cultures is characterized as being situational rather than abstract. (For the farmers of North Mollo, abstraction is pretty much limited to metaphor, which is, in turn, highly developed and highly prized as a form of intelligence.) Concepts rely on practical situations rather than categorical or abstract thinking.[223] In these oral or 'verbomotor' cultures "courses of action and attitudes toward issues depend significantly more on effective use of words, and thus on human interaction, and significantly less on non-verbal, often largely visual input from the 'objective' world of things" (p. 68). These differences determine "not only modes of expression but also thought processes" (p. 33).[224]

Ong's insights go a long way towards explaining the objectivity of positivist science, rooted as it is in literate culture that makes possible the distancing of the knower from the known, this in contrast to more organic ways of thinking that constantly seek to assimilate the unknown. A good example of assimilating the unknown is found in Traube (1986) who relates a Mambai myth where the Mambai recognize Portuguese

---

[223] By way of illustration Ong explains research carried out by A. R. Luria (author of *Cognitive development: Its cultural and social foundations*, 1976) among peasants in remote areas of the Soviet Union. Subjects from oral dominant cultures did not identify geometrical shapes according to their abstract name, but specifically in relation to practical use. Thus, a circle was not called a circle but a plate or watch or moon; a square might be called a door or house (pp. 49-57).

[224] Traube's (1986) retelling of a Mambai (Timor Lorosae) myth reveals how the Mambai have culturally negotiated their colonization by the Portuguese. In this myth, "Father Heaven, the great divider, distributes a patrimony between his two sons. To the eldest son, Ki Sa (who remains behind in Timor), he gives the sacred rock and tree...signs of ritual authority over a silent cosmos. Upon the youngest, Loer Sa (who leaves and travels afar), he bestows the book and pen, which Mambai regard as emblems of European identity" as well as those of political authority (p. 55). Although Traube does not make it explicit, this myth corroborates my position that epistemological difference turns on differences between oral and literate cultures. The Mambai adapt a common diarchy in Timor that divided ritual and political authority, in constructing a story about their relations with the Portuguese. In this story the division of authority is derived from differences between an oral culture aligned with nature and a literate culture whose power is represented by emblems of European culture capable of objectifying nature, namely the book and pen.

colonizers not as foreigners, but as long-lost younger brothers who, when they "reappear" in Timor, are greeted as such. The flag that Portuguese colonizers brought to Timor as a sign of conquest meant something very different to the Mambai who understood the flag to be a traditional *selimut* of their ancestors, brought from afar and offered as a gift to their older siblings who had remained in Timor. This, in turn, allowed them to designate political authority to the Portuguese and keep cultural authority for themselves in a kind of diarchy that evades subjugation.[225] Like assimilation, domestication also intellectually incorporates the other into indigenous categories and, therefore, might be considered an indigenous pedagogical category. The people of North Mollo assimilate and domesticate through recognition, a form of local knowledge, transforming what is foreign into something familiar.

The *Meto* Axis of Knowledge

In *uab meto* there are two words for knowing. *Uhin* means to know in the sense of comprehension and understanding. *Senat* means to know in the sense of recognizing someone or something. Conversely, *kase* (*ka se*) means foreign, literally not to know as in not recognize.[226] If *uhin*, cognition, is at one end of the *meto* axis of knowledge, *senat*, re-cognition, to know again, is at the other. This dimension of recognition is similar to that in the Hebrew creation myth recorded in Genesis 2.23a where an earth creature is transformed into two new beings (*'iššâ*, woman, and *'îš*, man) at the moment sexual differentiation occurs. Here the recognition is existential and assumes a mutuality of

---

[225] See Cunningham (1965) for a discussion of diarchy in Timor in which there are secular lords and a sacral lord.

[226] A foreigner may be *kaes muti* (white foreigner) or *kaes metan* (black foreigner). Peanuts are *fua kase*, foreign or unrecognized fruit and a horse is *bijael kase*, a foreign water buffalo.

purpose: "And *hā-'ādām* said, 'This, finally, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh'" (Trible, 1978). This aspect of recognition points to a corollary of all three of Ong's characteristics highlighted above, namely that in oral cultures knowledge is relational.[227] It is through recognition that *meto* people are able to "read" social relationships as well as the landscape.[228] It is one way they synthesize meaning, understand the world, and exercise power or are subject to it – to know someone or something is to have the possibility of power over him/her/it. For the people of Mollo, the cliché, "knowledge is power," can be expanded to include "recognition is power." To define recognition as knowledge broadens conventional epistemological questions about the content and validity of knowledge to include an ethical dimension that questions the nature of relations both social and ecological. I privilege this pole of recognition in a discussion of epistemological violation because it keeps attention focused on relational aspects of knowledge.[229]

Meto personifications of nature are reflected in *meto* cosmology that pairs the male sky god, *Uis Neno*, with the female goddess of the earth, *Uis Pah* in a relationship

---

[227] Hornborg (1996) writes briefly of a relationist conception of knowledge: "Beyond the paralysing, late modern stalemate between objectivism and relativism (cf. Bernstein 1983), it suggests a *rapprochement* of subject and object that might restore a sense of involvement and responsibility to the production of knowledge" (p. 52).

[228] Of the many examples that illustrate how people in Mollo read the landscape, I remember one in particular. One morning in Lelobatan, two young women from Fatukoto, the community at the foot of Naususu whose elders were vocally pro-mining, stopped at Papa Tius's with the news they had seen some flowering bamboo on the path they had taken. This was remarkable because this particular bamboo flowers only once every 50 years or so, and when it does it is read as an omen of pending disaster. The omen was proven true when several months later contestations surrounding the mining intensified and the razing of East Timor precipitated a refugee crisis in West Timor. See also Middelkoop (1960, pp. 79-80) who writes about a flood, a moon halo, and the cooing of a wood pigeon as omens of imminent disaster.

[229] For the *meto* people, real recognition comes by establishing kinship, no matter how distant. Explorations of recognition as they relate to kinship lie beyond the scope of the current study. See also Middelkoop (1960) who writes about a flood, a moon halo, and the cooing of a wood-pigeon (pp. 79-80) as omens of imminent disaster.

that is at once hierarchical and complimentary. Beyond this sacred dyad, however, personifications of nature reflect a *meto* epistemology in which comprehension and implementation of practical skills are intrinsically linked to social-cultural forms of recognition.

A traditional rice and corn planting song, *O He* (Appendix F), helps illustrate what I mean by knowledge as recognition. I knew of the song because farmers had mentioned it, but I never found anyone who actually sang it while planting. Today *O He* is remembered well enough to be sung by only a handful of farmers in Lelobatan, so I was grateful when they were willing to humor me with a "recording session." With the help of digging sticks and seed basket props, and with their tongues loosened by a little *sopi*, the farmers first rehearsed the song, and then "planted" the cement floor of Mama Maria's and Papa Tius's sitting room for about 10 minutes while I left the recorder on.

This song is a series of verses sung antiphonally between two groups of singers. The first group in front stands erect, moving across the field, making holes in the ground with their digging sticks. The second group follows close behind, stooped over at the waist, placing seeds in the holes and covering them over with dirt. The singers repeat one verse over and over again until they grow weary of it and then one or the other of the two groups will take the lead to begin a new antiphonal verse, much as the men in the *natoni* did at the beginning of Chapter 4.

The one verse transcribed in Appendix F only hints at the great praise the planters give to the land, the seeds, and the *pah tuaf* (guardian of the soil) that marks the overall theme of the song. As one of the performers explained, it is because of these three that the planters exist at all. That is why all three are equally deserving of praise. The first

verse describes what the planters are doing, women simply throw seeds into the earth ("pea" represents corn),[230] but as the chorus implies, it is the earth that cares for and protects the seeds. There is no way of knowing what one seed in the ground will become, whether or not the plant will stand tall and the harvest be plentiful. Thus praises are sung to the land so it will be fertile and to the small handful of seeds planted so they will produce baskets and baskets of grain and be pleasing at harvest time. Subsequent verses may involve more clear expressions of personification. For example, the two groups may take on the identity of rice, the one with short legs who is like a wife, and corn, the one with long legs who is like a husband. At this point the verses are parried back and forth like a husband and wife talking about their harvest. One verse, "Work like a slave, eat like a king," is answered with a countering moral injunction, "Work like a king, eat like a monkey." When the planting is finished the singers ask permission from the land to return to their homes. They then exit the field together and don't look back because they will visit again soon to weed. As with many other traditional customs related to the planting of rice and corn that are no longer observed, the disappearance of *O He* is due in great part to the spread of Christianity throughout TTS. Early Christian missionaries and evangelists discouraged a relational knowledge of nature, able only to perceive it as a pagan threat to Christianity.

This relational knowledge of nature can be further explained by considering how orality, with its momentum to merge knower and known, and literacy with its distancing

---

[230] The substitution of one word as stand-in for another is a *meto* honorific form. Livestock to be used for festival meat is regarded with great respect as common honorific terms suggest -- *kaki pendek*, short legs, refer to pigs and *kaki panjang*, long legs, to cows. Likewise, in *meto* weavings, particularly from the Amanuban region of TTS, figures of geckos are understood to represent the crocodile which is, in turn, a symbol for *uis oe*, the water god.

momentum, differently affect the sensorium.[231] For example, the land will feel different to someone who has gone barefoot her entire life from someone who has worn shoes; they touch the land differently, sense it differently. I remember being amazed at how people in Lelobatan could walk around at night so easily without the aid of a flashlight, and then realized it was because their night vision was so much better than mine. Likewise they were able to hear approaching vehicles much sooner than I. This was, in part, because they were less accustomed to the sound of traffic and so registered it more quickly than I did. Another example I have heard from a number of village women – they claim to know when a young woman is newly pregnant, whether or not she is married, just by looking at her. They see something in the woman's breasts and buttocks much sooner than I, and see something in the woman's eyes and clavicle that I have never seen. This, an example of a gendered way of knowing, relates to a different visuality in the Mollo culture of primary orality. These examples of differently attuned senses among the non-literate farmers of Mollo suggest they recognize and know the land in ways that are difficult for those whose senses have been constructed through literacy.

Another insight from Ong (1982) further explains how the people of Mollo relate to the land and its resources, in this case how they "read" their landscape: "In an oral culture, restriction of words to sound determines not only modes of expession but also thought processes. You know what you can recall" (p. 33). The *meto* people populate their landscape with named rocks and trees as mnemonic devices for locating and expressing identity. I liken it to a device I imagine might some day develop into my autobiography. A little bit of it goes like this. My body is inscribed with stories I recall

[231] My thanks to John Campbell-Nelson for this insight and the examples listed here.

by reading the scars on it – the scar leads to a story that, in turn, leads to more stories and different kinds of scars. For example, the scar on my right thumb, the result of a self-inflicted injury when splitting firewood while others dug a house foundation, is also the story of how my family came to build a house in Noelbaki, West Timor in 1994. The scar on my right knee, the result of ACL reconstruction following a sledding accident in Maine, evokes the tale of how I came to the University of Massachusetts in 1995 to pursue a graduate degree. The scar on my left thigh obtained in a body surfing encounter with a submerged rock in Bali in September 2000 leads to the story of my family's evacuation from West Timor following the murder of three UNHCR workers by East Timor militia "refugees." The physical scars on my body lead to stories that, in turn, have also created marks, both physical ones on the West Timor landscape as well as emotional ones on my psyche. I imagine the *meto* people use a similar method for constructing and reconstructing identity when they recall their history of migration or explain the significance of this or that named rock or tree. If my body serves as a tablet for personal identity, the land of Mollo is a hard disk for storing and retrieving meaning for the communities who live there.

The Epistemological Violation and the Resistance

In the case of Naususu there seemed to be intentional ambiguity surrounding the way resisters related to the rock. Sometimes the ancestor Nau mysteriously lived on in the rock Naususu. It was as if the farmers of Mollo were talking about, or to, their ancestor Nau. It was her anger at being violated that resisters sought to appease through a variety of curses (see below). Other times, the peak's identity seemed primarily a metaphor used to lay historical claim to the rock, both culturally and epistemologically.

Sometimes, before the mining, it was an open-air museum where outsiders could go to look at the soldier statue and shards of pottery, or an indigenous cathedral where local people still went for ritual prayer ceremonies. There are a number of different stories about Naususu, but the farmers in North Mollo have no need for a single, coherent theory about the meaning of the rock. The stories have equal valence, their meanings additive rather than subordinative (Ong, 1982).[232] They exist side by side, available for use as needed. In contrast, the mining of Naususu assumes a Cartesian dualism in which knowing subjects who possess skills and equipment are able to, even expected to manage an object separate from and subordinate to the knower.[233] This violates a *meto* epistemology in which subject and object are united not mystically, but through recognition. As with the epistemological rift between the Portuguese concept of flag as symbol of conquest and the Mambai concept of *selimut* as a token that relates them to their ancestors, so too the epistemological rift between the investor's reading of Naususu as a chunk of marble and the Mollo farmers who "read" it as the breast of Timor that provides the island's inhabitants with "milk." Once the mining begins and the indigenous, relational significance of place gives way to the exploitation of secular science, the relationship of local people to this rock is threatened. Exploitation of another, "unknown" rock might well not have been contested.[234]

---

[232] Ong (1982) explains that because oral discourse is surrounded by "full existential contexts" (p. 38) that help determine meaning, meanings tend to be added on to each other in thought shaped by orality. In writing, meaning is more dependent on linguistic structure and so a "more elaborate and fixed grammar" (p. 38) creates a structure in which some meanings are subordinate to others.

[233] Farmers in North Mollo use the Indonesian word for marble, *marmer*. There is no word for it in *uab meto*.

[234] It is important to reiterate a point made in Chapter 4, namely that Anjaf is the name rock of a particular clan, whereas Naususu, a communal rock with communal significance, is not.

The mining of Naususu was epistemologically violent because the relational knowledge of local farmers, in which the lines between them as knower and Naususu as known are blurred, was subjugated by literate knowledge that turned Naususu into an object. The tables turned and the mining brought to a halt when the resisters effectively used recognition as a weapon during the last major demonstration that finally shut down the mining of Anjaf-Naususu in August 2000. In efforts to diffuse resistance to the mining, not once did government officials address protests about ecological and cultural destruction. Instead they repeatedly insisted that the real problem was essentially a clan disagreement. This justified their one strategy of appearing to mediate between the two opposing local parties. What they sought, in fact, was for the protesters to accept the actions of the state-appointed local king and front man, Ben, who had signed the contract with the mining company.[235]

The resisters understood this agenda and so tended to shun all approaches by the government "mediation" team. Clearly resistance, not mediation, was prominent in the lived experience of the farmers. The *Bupati* of TTS, *Pak* Nope, as the government official most directly responsible for the mining of Anjaf-Naususu and author of the mediation approach, became the main target of protest by the resisters. *Pak* Nope does not originate from the Mollo region of TTS, but is a descendent of a king in the Amanuban region to the south. During the August 2000 demonstration, *Pak* Nope again came to the mining site as he had during previous sit-ins to mediate between locally opposed parties.

[235] It is interesting to note that the Indonesian government repeats a tactic developed by Dutch colonialists, namely setting up "indigenous" kings who will do their bidding.

This time, however, the protesters refuse to recognize him as the *Bupati* of TTS, but as a Timorese from Amanuban with absolutely no rights to land or resources in Mollo. They denied his status as a modern government official and instead valorized his clan identity in order to validate traditional over modern (external) political structures. By leveling the playing field in this way they symbolically domesticated the *Bupati* – stripping him of the authority he claimed in the outside realm of the modern nation state to place him squarely within their own social and political structures where they claim authority. *Pak* Nope was discursively transformed from government official into an indigenous Timorese. This recognition of him as fellow Timorese was then used to cast him out of Mollo as a member of another tribe. As an outcast, the Mollo protesters could, and did, humiliate him with abandon.[236]

Rehearsal as Resistance to Violation of Culture

Despite their passionate involvement in the resistance, many of the young people who opposed the mining of Anjaf-Naususu had only a partial understanding of the history or traditional beliefs related to the rock. Their position was not unlike that which Baviskar (2000) writes about in his discussion of environmental conflict in the Great Himalayan National Park in northwest India. Although younger villagers, particularly those better-off, no longer had either an active indigenous knowledge of natural resources or a "sacral" relationship to the park, they still appreciated such knowledge for its strategic value in organizing their community to resist; "...many of them believe that 'traditional' indigenous knowledge is valuable for defining their cultural identity vis-à-vis the state and outsiders" (p. 117).

[236] As described by *Nenek* Nau at the end of Chapter 4, jeers towards *Pak* Nope, included comments about his cowardliness, his impotency, and his underwear.

In the Anjaf-Naususu case, a similar construction of indigenous identity as political strategy was evident. It was not just young villagers who sought to take on the cultural persona of their elders, but also young activists who had even less an understanding of local culture than their village age peers. On several occasions, I witnessed (or heard about) young male activists, born and bred in the provincial capital, who shifted their identity by changing their clothes. They kept their T-shirts on, but traded their jeans for the woven red and white *selimuts* distinctive of Mollo, their knock-off Adidas and Nikes for thongs or bare feet, and, if making a formal visit to a government official, would blend in with the other men by donning a triangularly folded batik kerchief, an item essential to formal traditional attire in TTS. The young city activists did not speak *uab meto*, had never planted corn or beans or rice, could not distinguish a medicine vine from a poisonous one, could not explain a curse prayer or tell the story of how Naususu got its name, but they hid all that ignorance behind local garb. The indigenous identity they donned was blatantly political, on the surface, and temporary, lasting no longer than the hours of a lobbying session with a government official or the days of a sit-in. Once the weeks of organizing and planning, sit-ins, and demonstrations came to an end, the activists too left the villages. This "dress-up and make like natives" strategy of some activists is what pointed me in the direction of performance as a useful perspective for discussing cultural violation and resistance to it.

Why Rehearsal?

One reason to discuss resistance to cultural violation as rehearsal is because so many of the cultural forms I witnessed – rituals, prayers, oral histories, even diatribes – were performances, acted out for those present, for the ancestors, and for the *meto* and

Christian deities.[237] Located on the stage of resistance, these traditional cultural forms required not only an audience, but also particular speech, attire, stylized gestures, and props. So why call it rehearsal rather than performance? Because rehearsal connotes learning in a way performance does not. I cannot say how polished or "out of practice" the performers of these traditional cultural forms were. There is no baseline data with which to compare either the frequency or quality of the practices I recorded. My sense of the situation, however, was that the mining of Anjaf-Naususu was the impetus that launched the recollection and reinvigoration of practices that had fallen by the wayside. It is quite possible, e.g., that the search for someone to pray this or that prayer, to read chicken entrails, or to recite history, had not so much to do with culturally specified roles as it did with simply finding someone who still remembered, more or less, the script. These former practices that, I speculate, were taken out of the closet and dusted off with a lot of improvisation, were rehearsed in efforts to recall and relearn how traditional cultural identity is performed.

These practices were also a rehearsal for learning resistance. Beyond the organization of farmers from a number of North Mollo villages to execute a sit-in and demonstration strategy at Anjaf-Naususu, there was no grand resistance scheme.[238] Different groups of farmers rehearsed different methods at different times and places,

---

[237] Scott (1990) helps make clear some parallels that might be drawn between performance by the subordinate and the dominant when he writes about performance by the latter: "Being on stage in front of subordinates exerts a powerful influence on the conduct and speech of the dominant. They have a collective theater to maintain which often becomes part of their self-definition. Above all, they frequently sense that they perform before an extremely critical audience which waits in eager anticipation for any sign that the actors are losing their touch" (pp. 49-50).

[238] Arenas's (1998) division of resistance into two forms – "individual and spontaneous, and collective and organized" (p. 146) is useful here. However, small-scale domestic-based forms of resistance were seldom individual and only occasionally fully spontaneous since a performance had to wait on someone who could assist with a prayer or the reading of entrails.

seeking to learn, as they do with farming practices, what works and what doesn't. As the ceremony to officially launch the mining approached,[239] tensions heightened and rumors of planned attacks on resisters were increasingly heard. These were accompanied by an increase in the frequency of ritual prayers by protesters and the number of people who spoke out against the mining. Prayers offered at an earlier point in this process of resistance were, then, a rehearsal for those that followed. That members of one household participated in or observed rituals performed by another may have stimulated similar performances in their own households to create a snowball effect of spontaneous, "domestic" acts of resistance.

The etymology of the word rehearsal, which originates from the Latin *hirpex* (French *herse*) meaning to rake or harrow, further explains its appropriateness in this analysis. According to the *Encarta World English Dictionary*, "Agricultural harrows in the Middle Ages were typically toothed triangular frames, so the word for a harrow came to be applied in French to a triangular toothed frame for holding candles, as used in a church, and particularly as placed over a coffin at funeral services."[240] Rehearsal, which etymologically means to rake or harrow again, is what I saw happening among many of the protesters. Rehearsals to protest the mining that took place over many months in many locations were at one level like a rake combing through the identities of the farmers and the small communities of resistance they formed, refining, smoothing out, and at the same time recreating traditional constructs of cultural identity – histories, performative

---

[239] Many protesters noted, with disgust, that the September 1999 ceremony was held months after the mining actually began in March or April of that year, several months prior to signing of the contract by local representatives and the mining company in May 1999.

[240] *Encarta®World English Dictionary* © & (P) 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Developed for Microsoft by Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

languages, genealogies, rituals – that might lend themselves to a larger performance of resistance. They re-raked these forms of identity so as not to lose them, rehearsing the power that comes through the assertion of cultural autonomy.

Individual and communal identities along with the values that shape and reflect them guide behavior while providing access to cultural production. The reconstruction of local identities precipitated by the mining was not a matter of "natural orientation" where some farmers just happened to be more "modern" and others more "traditional." Rather, identity was a site for the contestation of values and meaning.[241] With a few exceptions, the prevailing discourse of government officials appealed to nationalist over traditional identity.[242]

As good citizens, farmers would have to accept the mining and, when they did not, state accusations that they were anarchists and subversive Communists condemned their betrayal of nationalist, not cultural identity. Resisters differentiated themselves from this state-promoted identity through the exercise of what in this context can

---

[241] Middlekoop (1960) hints at a similar contestation precipitated by Christian evangelization in Timor. The first Protestant Christians in Kupang were the Mardijkers, a conglomeration of freed slaves, native Christians, subjects who sought to break away from their chiefs, and others. Since conversion to Chrisitanity elevated Timorese to a higher social level vis-à-vis the Dutch, some chiefs insisted only they be baptized and not their subjects for whom baptism would bestow too much honor. Other non-Christian chiefs, however, were quite unhappy about a Dutch decision that made Christians exempt from slavery and so they openly opposed Christianity. Until a decline in tourism in recent years, the provincial Tourism Board actively promoted Boti in the Amanatun region of TTS as the last known non-Christian community in West Timor where supposedly authentic, traditional Timorese could be observed *in situ*. The king and members of this community were baptized only recently in August 2002. Perhaps the Tourism Board needs new leadership as it keeps losing tourist sites – Naususu to miners and Boti to Christianity.

[242] Piet Sabuna, the TTS *Bupati* prior to *Pak* Nope and the one who opened up Mollo to mining investors realized that traditional cultural identity, particularly in terms of constructs of the land and its resources, was a potential problem for mining in TTS that demanded sensitivity and the proper approach. "No matter what, the approach we use must be grounded in existing tradition. We must seek their permission so that we obtain their blessing, because we ourselves don't know. There may be some locations that are sacred" ("Warga Molo Utara diminta," 1997). As will be explored below, blessing is the antithesis to curse.

rightfully be named oppositional culture.[243] They resisted the erasure of cultural identity by actively exercising it. Through repeated rehearsals of cultural forms, they stressed a local, ethnic identity that is inscribed on the landscape (see Chapter 1). For the farmers of Mollo, locality and identity cannot be separated; at one and the same time they construct both nature and community. From the identity of rocks as the site of clan origins, to the historical linking of family names to place through migration narratives, to spatial expressions for kin affiliation (McWilliam, 1997), the space of nature is socially constructed in such a way as to constantly tell people who they are.[244]

The Cultural Violation and the Resistance

To tear asunder the particular locality of Anjaf-Naususu was to tear asunder identity; conversion of the peaks' cultural (not use) value into exchange value by the mining company constituted a violation of culture. Because the mining more clearly violated local history and cultural meanings than the material base of local livelihoods, resistance to it was primarily a struggle for control of symbolic rather than material means of production.[245] The only gardens disturbed by the mining were those through which access roads were widened, but the material loss due to this was minimal. For

---

[243] In his refreshing discussion of the role of education in forming nationalist identity in East Timor and resistance to it, Arenas (1998) traces how Indonesian efforts to form national identity were finally defeated by an oppositional culture of resistance.

[244] The intimate relationship of community to nature is related in Middlekoop (1960) citing Heymering's account of a famous battle between the Dutch and Portuguese for control of Kupang. In an effort to mobilize local support for their attack on the (Protestant) Dutch who held Kupang, Portugal sent a few priests to baptize the people of Amarasi (west of Kupang). Not only did the priests baptize the king and members of his household, they also baptized the soil and a few trees, dedicating them to some protecting patron-saints, as a means to consecrate the entire people of Amarasi in preparation for war (pp. 37-39). It didn't work. The Amarasi switched sides, and the Portuguese were defeated in the well-known Battle of Penfui (1749).

[245] See Moore (1996) for the importance of reading the landscape as a "surface of semiotics as well as soil" (p. 139).

some years the plain to the north of Anjaf-Naususu had not been productive except as grazing land, and since the mining site was never fenced off, the pastures were not physically disturbed.[246]

The argument that the mining destroyed a source of firewood and reduced wild game that supplemented local diets was specious. The peaks were never a source of firewood, as women and children collect readily available firewood from woods close to their hamlets. As for the wild game, the role it plays in the upland diet is insignificant. Some of the resisters argued that farming areas below the peaks that were irrigated by streams and rivers fed by headwaters at the base of the rock would suffer once those springs dried up, but no one ever tried to monitor such an impact. In any event, it would be difficult to develop a convincing correlation between the mining and lowland drought since much of West Timor experiences long periods of seasonal drought. Nevertheless, common sense suggests there is bound to be an impact when the structure of the land is so drastically altered by removal of heavy forest and removal of non-porous rock – this is, after all, the major watershed of West Timor. It was the gendered, historical identity of Naususu, the "recognition" factor, which carried emotional weight for most of the resisters.

My intimate association with a family whose members were well-known as backers of the anti-mining effort made it impossible for me to collect data from mining supporters or farmers who worked at the site. The one time I went with members of my family and a few friends to the site during an early stage of the mining, we were told to leave by one of the mining supervisors. The rift between the two parties was so sharply

[246] It is possible the noise of mining saws and drills kept cattle off this grazing land, but I have no data to support this.

drawn that I was unable to bridge it.[247] From the time of the failed meeting with professors in Fatukoto when one of the "spies" I tried to approach turned and walked away from me (Chapter 2),[248] the lines that excluded me from collecting data from a pro-mining perspective were drawn. Without such data I can only speculate as to reasons why some farmers supported the mining. Some may have given in to pressure or intimidation, some were perhaps honored to have been approached by important government and mining officials. Some may have figured the mining would proceed whether or not they agreed to it so they might as well get what they could out of it whether that be cash, electric generators, zinc roofing, or an opportunity for salaried labor. Others may have seen some common good in the mine because if offered farmers an alternative to the drudgery of field labor and feudal relations that felt to them oppressive. For whatever reasons, some farmers decided to throw their social capital in with the government and investor rather than with the local communities in Mollo.

Further consideration of the interview by a few young women with men in Fatukoto (Chapter 2) reveals the men were engaged in a learning process as they sought to determine what was at stake if they did or did not support the mining. They weighed things they heard from the government, from Ben, the former king's son who signed the contract with the miners, and from activists. Negotiating the push and pull between heavy local village pressures to support the mining and cultural pressures to oppose it led them to a compromised stance towards the mining that turned on a technicality immanent

---

[247] That this rift cut off meaningful communication is suggested by the manner in which the mining company left. Rather than seeking to negotiate directly with the resisters, the miners made a quick getaway during the large anti-mining demonstration in August 2000, never to return.

[248] This was the man who had already put his bid in with the miners and yet attended my "research debut" with village leaders and a subsequent anti-mining discussion before his real position regarding the mining became known.

in local cultural knowledge.[249] These men agreed to the mining of Anjaf, but not Naususu as the latter had greater general cultural significance than the former. Had they expressed distress over the mining of Naususu, it would have shown they stuck by their position.[250]

Even without more data regarding the position and reasoning of farmers who appeared to support the mining, it would be a mistake to assume the site's cultural significance no longer had a hold on them. On several occasions ardent local supporters of the mining were rumored to have carried out ritual prayers at the peaks. Without data we are left speculating what the prayers were for, but the fact they were held at the mining location suggests acknowledgement of cosmological and/or ancestral powers associated with Naususu. There is a further possibility that prayers by supporters of the mining were intended to counter curses they either knew about or suspected had been deployed against them by the opposition. As Middelkoop (1960) explains in his seminal study, *Curse – Retribution – Enmity*, the Timorese curse-complex turns on a belief of naturally-occurring enmity in the cosmos (powers of darkness are cosmic entities) that manifests itself, among other ways, in intertribal warfare. The *meto* people seek to appease their ancestors and gods with sacrifices, but if they fail, the gods and ancestors will become angry and cosmic imbalance occurs in which eventually transcendental justice demands retribution. It is in this light that Middelkoop seeks to understand head-

[249] Villagers in Fatukoto, the village closest to Anjaf-Naususu, came under heavy pressure to support the mining or at least not obviously oppose it. Some, no doubt, felt caught between a rock and a hard place (so to speak), fearing reprisals if they did not support the mining, but also fearing traditional forms of retribution if they did.

[250] The mining of Naususu had not yet begun by mid-July 1999 when these men were interviewed.

hunting, a once common practice on many islands in the archipelago, including Timor, as a kind of tribute paid to the ancestors and gods to ward off disaster.

In North Mollo, family and clan feuds do not fade with time, they only fester. Encroachment on another's land, stealing of livestock, murder, marriages in which bride price exchange was absent or incomplete, adultery – accounts of such disruptions to a harmonious social order are often passed down from generation to generation. Even today, when inexplicable illness or death occurs, it is understood as divine retribution for sins that may extend back through several generations. The weight of multiple layers of transgression might threaten to undo even the most tightly knit community were it not for the mechanisms that exist to ease such a build-up and restore at least an approximation of cosmic balance. Balance is restored either when a curse placed on the wrongdoer is fulfilled, or the wrongdoer confesses all family wrongdoing in a ceremony known as *naketi*.[251]

Several of the prayers offered up in opposition to the mining that I witnessed, or learned about later, were elaborate curses against Ben, the mining company, government officials, or all three. They were proffered in an effort to seek retribution on behalf of the ancestors/cosmic powers that were violated by the mining.[252] When I realized that curses

---

[251] *Naketi* is both an admission of guilt (understood judicially as righting social relations) and a confession of sin (understood theologically as righting relations with God and the ancestors). It is usually precipitated when someone manifests signs of guilt (such as lingering sickness or an injury that won't heal). If the wrongdoing is remembered accurately and the desire for repentance and compensation to the ones wronged is sincere, the symptoms usually disappear. What is especially interesting, however, is that the sins of one generation may haunt the lives of another. A grandmother's sin may not be set right until one of her grandchildren – who may have little previous knowledge of the grandmother's wrongdoing – confesses via *naketi*. Because this is often the case, the need for *naketi* is often recognized not by the wrongdoer her/himself (or her/his descendants), but from an older family member who remembers sins of the past. In the same way that transgressions and forgiveness of them may stretch across generations, so too does the agency of transgression stretch across from individual to communal misconduct.

[252] A thorough analysis of the various curses deployed in the resistance is beyond the scope of this study. It should be noted, however, that the *meto* often make no sharp distinction between cosmic deities

were used by both pro- and anti-mining advocates, that they moved in many directions with many intents, it became apparent that the retribution and enmity pivoting around them formed a system of interpretation. To seek retribution on those who brought in the mining, for example, reinforced the belief that the mining was indeed responsible for creating cosmic imbalance. Reading Middelkoop's list of curses (1960), I find one identified as a "weapon of the defenceless [sic]" (pp. 62-64) and am reminded of Scott's weapons of the weak. This curse, says Middlekoop, is the only way for the poor and powerless to justify themselves by seeking transcendental justice. Some farmers may have cursed the mining because they did not trust a formal judicial process – appeals to transcendental justice were necessary because justice on earth was not possible. For others, however, the appeal to divine retribution was necessary because it was the only way they knew to seek justice since they have no knowledge of formal Indonesian law. The curses were also a way for those without resources or the courage to fight back physically to still retaliate. As such, they were a substitute for violence. Insofar as the curses were intended to exact Timorese justice, their logic was a moral one.

However, just because such curses were issued on behalf of restoring the cosmic order made them no less violent. For example, prior to the recitation of one oral history I recorded, were several long prayers that involved libation to the ancestors by pouring a small, symbolic amount of palm wine onto the earth. Before the history could be recited,

---

and ancestors, both categories of which are both benevolent and malevolent. Mauss (1990) suggests such a conflation in his discussion regarding potlatch and exchange among natives on either side of the Behring straits. These communities believe they must first and foremost establish a contract with "the spirits of both the dead and of the gods" (p. 16). Mauss subsequently refers to these two not as one but as together in relationships of exchange with humans. He also writes about the intermingling of souls with things, pointing out that many items of exchange carry around the soul of the giver with them until remunerations have been made. In the context of resistance to the mining, at least, it was often implied that Nau's spirit lived on in the rock.

relations among clan members had first to be made straight, even if just symbolically (Chapter 2). It would be tempting to regard with romance the fomenting of peace and goodwill among family members prior to the remembrance and construction of family history were it not for the omnipresent curse whose violence spares little for the imagination. In this case, the curse included the desire for Ben to be a red pig that would drip with his own blood. Articulating local strategies of resistance, I uncover moral tensions between restoration of social/cosmic balance and the violence thought necessary to enact it, between mutuality and enmity, as farmers sought to maintain harmony with nature, the ancestors/gods, the Christian God, and their fellow tribal members.

Embedded within the act of launching curses, however, was an element of self-loathing. The protesting farmers who took their history seriously knew that the people of Mollo had been entrusted with protection of the headwaters around West Timor's Mt. Mutis, including the springs at Naususu. This was to insure that water would flow to people below. Although at the time of the protest they could only imagine what the actual ecological consequences of the mining might be, there was no doubt they had failed to fulfill their duty as protectors of the rock. Because of that they expected that sooner or later the ancestors/cosmos would exact revenge. When there was an exceptionally long, heavy rainy season that year (1999-2000), many were quick to state it was punishment because the people of Mollo had not stopped the mining (see Chapter 2, p. 104).

A second perspective from which to consider the self-loathing embedded in the curses is apparent when we consider those farmers who backed the mining. What did it mean for farmers, who shared the same history as those who resisted, to support the

mining? Was it a sign of self-hatred, begat by a hegemonic development discourse that convinced them they were indeed stupid and backward, that prompted them to deny their ways of knowing and history?[253] Or did they so fear accusations of supporting anarchism that they bent over backwards to distance themselves from indigenous identity, much as Timorese did in 1965-1966 who burned off their tatoos and cut their long hair in an effort to prove they were not Communists (Campbell-Nelson, K., 1998)? That some supporters were still bound by the retribution-enmity matrix, in which extreme measures of retribution could be expected for violating this particular rock, is evident by the fact that some were said to have prayed at Naususu, most probably to break the hold of the ancestors believed to reside there. But perhaps the most striking incident that suggested to me that cosmic powers are capable of great revenge and so to be greatly feared was the attempt by one couple to "purify" their mining money (Chapter 2).

In their few conversations with Papa Tius and Mama Maria over several months, both the husband and wife of this couple said it was practically impossible to live in Fatukoto and *not* support the mining. Although I knew one or two farmers from there who consistently claimed they did not support it (although they had to be quiet about it), it was hard to evaluate their position. One man in Fatukoto who claimed to oppose the mining still managed to accumulate enough pieces of marble to build a new house for his

---

[253] This is quite possible. I once attended a seminar sponsored by a local LSM that brought together provincial-level bureaucrats from offices with responsibility for natural resource management such as the Departments of Forestry and Mining, activists, and outspoken villagers from locations where forestry and mining resources have been or are being extracted. A young university professor who was asked to speak drew tumultuous applause from both activists and villagers present when the attack he launched against the government pointed out the gaps between "rich and poor." In his own consumerist version of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" (that I'm almost certain he knows nothing about), he shared with those present some of his visions for villagers throughout the province of NTT. He longed for a day when their way of life would be that of advanced civilization marked by "healthy houses" with zinc roofs, sedans to drive, and eating canned food.

family. Considering the actions of this man, I began to question what counted as opposition and what counted as compliance. How should the stance of someone not employed by the mining company and who privately complained about the mining, yet benefited from chunks of marble be weighed? In what corner was I to place the man who worked for the mining company, yet considered the fruits of his labors so morally tarnished that he and his wife would not use them without a rite of purification? That this couple came to Papa Tius, someone who openly opposed the mining on cultural and historical grounds, to "purify" their tainted money points to the moral stakes the mining entailed for the farmers of North Mollo.[254]

Middelkoop (1960) relates the story of a 16-year-old who, accused of breaking *adat* rules regarding exogamy (committing incest with his maternal cousin), killed himself by climbing high in a coconut tree, made an impassioned suicide speech from among the branches, and then jumped to his death. It is possible that for some local supporters of the mining, having traded in *adat* rules for ones set by the investor, they too must inflict self-damage. Having become deaf and blind to *adat*, they sought cultural amnesia or, as Rojas might say they sought to become dememorized (quoted in Taussig, 1980, p. 154). Because they broke *adat* rules regarding protection of the area, they were left with no honorable means to locally negotiate identity other than cultural suicide. In a performance to end all performances, they have no need to rehearse. That the mining

[254] To the extent that Anjaf-Naususu peaks are considered sites where the ancestors' spirits dwell, destroying the site is paramount to murder and money earned from mining is indeed the blood money of mercenaries – workers have been hired to annihilate not dead rock, but a vital component of the local cosmology. [See also Taussig, 1980, on baptizing money as an effort to explain capital "in terms that reveal it to be unnatural and immoral" p. 132.]

company created the conditions for intense moral dilemmas, self hatred, and such an erasure of identity is not only a cultural violation, it is cultural violence.

For many NGO activists and myself, the noise of bulldozers that ripped away the forest, the sound of saws and drills boring deep into Anjaf and Naususu, marked the "...advance of market organization [that] tears asunder a way of seeing" (Taussig, 1980, p. 121), something that instilled in us a great sense of urgency to stop the ecological violence. But, we were puzzled to discover, it was an urgency that local farmers who also resisted the mining did not seem to share. In retrospect I think one reason was because, for the farmers, resistance involved more than just withdrawal of the mining company. Whereas the NGO strategies were focused on pressuring the government, farmers' strategies that were directed inwards toward the community focused almost exclusively on how to turn the hearts and behaviors of fellow Timorese who betrayed their history through acquiescence or active support of the mining. It was first and foremost the cultural amnesia among members of their own families and communities that the anti-mining farmers sought to address through their resistance, particularly the curses. Their struggle was couched primarily in terms of maintaining or restoring internal cultural and moral cohesion among farmers in North Mollo.

Reciprocity as Resistance to Economic Violation

One has only to meet a *meto* farmer, at any time in almost any place, to experience the centrality of exchange that can be observed in all aspects of *meto* life. Many times a day while living in Lelobatan I would be offered the gift of areca (betel) nut – in the home where I stayed, in corn and peanut fields, just outside church as soon as services were over, by the side of a path. The farmer would open up his or her shoulder

bag, take out a betel nut (whole or split, depending on how much was in the bag) and a sirih leaf or fruit (depending on the season), and arrange them neatly in what was usually a carved bamboo cylinder taken from the same bag. Then, with just a hint of ritual solemnity, the farmer would bow slightly in my direction as the cylinder was offered. The expectation was that I would not only accept and partake of the proffered betel but would also reciprocate by offering betel nut of my own. I quickly learned to carry a shoulder bag in which I kept all the proper betel accoutrements whenever I left the house.

Meto exchange, however, is not usually so materially tit-for-tat. When Mauss (1990) writes about giving and receiving, he stresses the exchange of "total services" to include besides material goods such things as the giving of divine blessing, festivals, humans (e.g., slaves, wives), and sex. Knowledge too is an exchange commodity as I learned observing the "extraction" of oral histories. It is customary for the one requesting the history to first offer a bottle of distilled palm wine to the one who is to recite the history, not only as a gift for the recitation service rendered and to loosen the tongue so that the recitation will be fluent, but also for the history which is itself considered an object of exchange. On one occasion when I wanted to record a history but failed to produce the expected drink, not only was I scolded, I did not get an oral history (that must be recited in *uab meto*), but only a partial Indonesian explanation of some historical highlights. Perhaps the belief is that palm wine is necessary to enable communication with the ancestors and that without it, neither they nor the one reciting can speak.[255]

[255] Further research is needed to determine whether there is a belief that spirits of the ancestors actually speak through the one reciting. If so, the reciter is more a medium than an actor, and the palm wine is necessary to loosen the tongue of the ancestors or in some way enable the reciter's communication with them. Another option is that such elaborate beliefs are created as an "excuse" for the reciter to get high.

Obligations to give, receive, and reciprocate run deep. As Traube (1986) writes in her study of ritual exchange among the Mambai of East Timor, the concept of life as a gift underlies a notion of reciprocity between life and death in which ritual exchange involves both humans and non-humans in social and cosmological obligations. Even today for many villagers throughout Timor, access to a consumer culture remains sufficiently marginal such that most material relations are still closely linked to social ones.[256]

It is here we see reciprocity overlap with both recognition (reciprocity reinforces recognition)[257] and rehearsal (implied in ritual forms of exchange) to create a tight social fabric. Reasons for giving are many. From tribute to the gods and the ancestors for their gift of life or to forestall their anger to preserving prestige to establishing social ties and alliances to atoning for murder,[258] giving is the "pro" in reciprocity. That this obligation must be met in return assures ongoing material relations in the social realm and balance in the cosmic realm.

In a subsistence economy, food is a powerful medium of exchange. Traditionally, *meto* people would approach their king, the great, protecting father, to ask for seed that

---

[256] Take, for example, the story of the first truck to enter TTS. When it stopped in a village, the farmers, wanting to relate to it in the only way they knew how, tried to feed it hay. Like the English expression, Indonesian slang for a train as well as other vehicles is *besi kuda*, iron horse.

[257] "The potlatch, the distribution of goods, is the basic act of 'recognition', military, juridical, economic, and religious in every sense of the word. One 'recognizes' the chief or his son and becomes 'grateful' to him" (Mauss, 1990, p. 40).

[258] Middelkoop (1960) writes about how a murderer may be atoned through a fine or *uang bangun* ("resurrection money") paid to family members of the person murdered. This payment works like an amulet to protect the murderer and members of the murderer's family while also providing compensation for the life taken to those people who will suffer the loss. Such a fine could also be paid to avoid the death penalty. What the Dutch missionary Middelkoop called *uang bangun* in the 1920s is today called *uang suap* (bribe money) by members of Indonesian Corruption Watch and other critics of the Indonesian judicial system.

was symbolically given in the form of the locally valuable orange coral beads. In this context, the king functioned as a stand-in for *Uis Neno*, the sky god who spills his "seed" onto the womb of mother earth goddess on behalf of the people, referred to in this context as "children." The *upeti* or tribute given the king when the first grains were harvested was seen as repayment for the seeds, albeit symbolic, he had given his children. It is said that, were the king fair and kind, he could be prevailed upon to feed his subjects with food from his stores of grain during times of drought. In exchange for symbolic seeds, farmers gave a portion of their harvests to their king in return for collective food security. That this process of exchange did not challenge the feudal system of which it was a part shows that reciprocity is not inherently symmetrical, sharing with capitalism some aspects of the exercise of power through the maintenance of unequal material relations. It is possible that farmers who supported the mining thought they were simply trading in an out-dated form of feudalism for a more modern one: the investor takes the place of a king, consumer goods the place of food security, and social and political relations are dominated by capitalist ones. Despite the similarities, the *meto* system of exchange at once depends on and perpetuates mutuality, a movement contrary to accumulation of capital.

This is not to say the Timorese have been isolated from mercantilism. Sandalwood was among goods shipped from what is today Indonesia to Arabia as early as the 10th century, was in Javanese ports at the time of the Sung Dynasty in China, and was part of international trade in the 13th and 14th centuries. Both sandalwood and beeswax are mentioned as Indonesian trade goods in the 15th century (van Leur, 1955). No doubt Timor's incorporation first into the Portuguese, and later the Dutch colonial

systems, accelerated European consumption of its resources. By 1870, sandalwood oil had become useful as a medicine in Europe, and it was increasingly sought by the pharmaceutical industry. After 1925, when a better technology for managing chemicals was discovered, Western Europe began to develop the oil as perfume (Messakh, 1999). It is safe to surmise that Timor has a long history of trading natural resources to outside merchants. Nevertheless, the *meto* people themselves relate this history to be one of reciprocity. As the oral history narrated by Papa Lius in Chapter 4 points out, important messages the early sibling inhabitants of Timor gave each other before they separated goes straight to the heart of reciprocity. The oldest sibling said to the two younger siblings:

> You who hold all ideas and miracles, you return to our place that is the wide continent. Return with all the ideas and expertise you have acquired – how to make batik cloth and turn it into clothing. And if we lack machetes, spades, axes, or such cloth, we will ask for it from our younger siblings…to give these to us. Then the younger siblings gave a message in return: You remain here on this smallest of islands and guard and hold on to the wax from honey and also hold on to the sandalwood that is here. If we lack wax and sandalwood, we will ask you to help by giving it to us. So together they agreed that if one lacked something he would exchange items or order things from the others. This was a reminder for them to love and remember each other when they separated.

As with the incorporation of the Portuguese flag into the Mambai system of exchange system by treating it as a *selimut* from the ancestors, the *meto* people also appropriated relations of mercantile capitalism into their own myth of origins in which reciprocity plays a central role. As long as they had no concept of the exchange value of wax and sandalwood as defined by capitalist relations beyond the shores of Timor, they could continue to produce value based on their own understanding of exchange as it contributes to a collective, albeit feudal, good.

The Economic Violation and the Resistance

In the same way the state pretended to concede to a local *adat* structure by first "consulting" about the mining with *adat* leaders who were actually their front men,[259] so too it manipulated the *meto* economy of exchange, making a mockery of reciprocity in several ways to serve mining interests. First, according to a chronology of resistance activity during 2000 prepared by one of the activists involved (Baun, 2001), each time a government official approached a local elder to seek his support for the mining, a woven betel nut container that included betel nut and an envelope of money was presented. This is a long-standing strategy that the government has used over the years to persuade local leaders to lend their support to various government projects.

Meto people are particularly vulnerable to this approach as their system of exchange obligates them to receive as much as to give. As mentioned in this report, the money in the envelope might be as little as 5,000 *rupiah* for "small" matters, such as seeking an audience with an *amaf* or changing the date of a meeting, or as much as 200,000 *rupiah* for weightier matters. During the weeks leading up to the deadline set by the governor for a resolution of the mining conflict (mid-August 2000), several *amaf* were offered amounts of *rupiah* dressed up as betel-nut ranging from 80,000 to 200,000. Although by that time most of the *amaf* opposed the mining, they still accepted the money offered, some to keep as proof of attempted bribery, others apparently spending it without concern for the breach they committed by accepting a gift with no intention of repaying it with a bid to support the mining. With only a few days to go, several of the *amaf* known to oppose the mining were picked up and escorted in government vehicles to

[259] As stated above, Ben, the former king's illegitimate son, was set up by the government to "represent" local interests when in fact he was a front man to promote the mining.

a secret meeting with the TTS *Bupati* in which they were offered 10 million *rupiah* as payment for Naususu. They all refused. It appears that breaches of the reciprocity ethic are possible (some spent the smaller amounts they were offered), but only within limits.

The mining further violated *meto* economy when the terms of the exchange were ignored by the mining company. The company gave grandiose promises to both the state (major road improvements, state revenue) and the local people of Fatukoto (new church, scholarships for children, etc.), but most of its promises went unfulfilled. Because I never knew any state official to complain about worsening road conditions caused by the heavy marble trucks, it seems not unlikely their silence had been purchased through personal remuneration. However, farmers took these promises seriously and became angry when it appeared they had been duped. Once again, there are signs that resisters engaged in multiple positions vis-à-vis the mining. In some of the earliest local meetings I attended at which farmers expressed anger about the mining, Papa Tius brought up the issue of how the previous mining company at Naususu had essentially taken the marble and run. He remembered exactly how many rocks of marble had been taken without remuneration (48) and was also quick to stress that the promised marble factory to provide lucrative jobs never materialized.[260]

I always wanted to think of Papa Tius as a bastion of the resistance. When he spoke at this meeting of the need to demand a fair market value for the marble and the need to establish a marble factory in the region, I told myself he was merely being

---

[260] Rumors circulated regarding at least three different sites supposedly chosen for building a marble factory – one site mentioned was close to Anjaf-Naususu, another location was Soe where there were more youth in need of employment, and a third site mentioned was in my own home village of Noelbaki which was thought to have water enough for a factory that would need to polish the rock. Each site had its own advantages, but the essential problem was that the investor apparently never intended to build a factory in West Timor.

sensitive to expected terms of *meto* reciprocity. As he once righteously bragged to me, he was following the path of faith, whereas Ben was taking the "path of money." Another time he told me he prioritized "heart ties" over "material ties. It is also possible he raised the issue of fair profit-sharing because he thought it a convincing argument that would make good sense to those he addressed. It may be that, at those times when Papa Tius seemed inconsistent or his motivations duplicitous, he was simply rehearsing resistance.

As implied above, the fundamental economic violation associated with the mining was nothing new, but rather reiteration of a dominant system that challenges values promoted by *meto* reciprocity. Such challenges are summed up by remarks from a friend who once served a church in a North Mollo village not far from Anjaf-Naususu. He said members of his congregation had trouble relating to the Bugis traders[261] who lived in the community, not because they were Muslim, but because they were guided by different assumptions about exchange. Whereas the farmers would sell their garlic to the traders at a very low price, they could not understand why the Bugis would not reciprocate in kind by selling their goods cheaply. Also, they would invite Bugis to their ceremonies – when someone married or died – but were puzzled when the Bugis would attend, but empty-handed. The farmers assumed that exchange with the Bugis was intended primarily to form a social bond with them, an assumption that the Bugis, who may have encouraged such relations insofar as they helped their trade, did not share.[262]

---

[261] The Bugis, almost all Muslim, are an ethnic group from southern Sulawesi. Many have voluntarily migrated to Timor where they have developed an economic niche for themselves, traveling on motorcycles laden with the cheap plastic and aluminum wares they successfully sell to farmers in villages hard to reach by car or bus.

[262] Researchers may also do the same thing, i.e., encourage relations with indigenous people insofar as it helps their research without demanding long-term social bonds.

A consideration of some characteristics of money helps to clarify how the mining was a violation of reciprocity. Whereas money is both portable and anonymous (as far as the resisters were concerned, this also described the investor), the *meto* system of reciprocity depends on recognition of place and community that are neither. The resisters could argue with the pro-mining farmers and government officials because they knew them. However, they didn't know how to deal with the investor because they didn't know him or his company. Shareholders of the mining company, their families, backgrounds, likes, dislikes – none of this was known by the farmers of North Mollo. This is in striking contrast to the brothers with batik cloth and weapons of whom they speak with fondness in their origin myth. In short, none of the farmers, either for or against the mining, had any strong footing on which to negotiate with the investor, so they never tried. The investor kept his distance, something that money makes possible in a way *meto* forms of exchange do not. In like manner, money is unattached, floats freely around the world passing through many contexts. This is in contrast to objects used in traditional forms of *meto* exchange that serve to bind people within a given context to each other socially, not just fiscally.[263] The ethic of reciprocity constantly seeks to mend weak and poor relations because the exchange depends on good relations within a bounded community. Although excommunication from a family or community happens, it is rare. The enmity comes when principles of exchange are ignored, such as through theft, a far greater crime in West Timor communities than unpaid debts.

---

[263] Some might argue reciprocity is nothing more than a system of continual, mutual debt and that money too binds people to each other through debt. The comparison doesn't work. One difference between Indonesia's debt to the IMF and Mama Maria's exchange of betel nut with Mama Debora is one of scale in terms of time and space. A more important difference, however, is that Mama Maria and Mama Debora's futures are connected to each other in a way that Indonesia's and the IMF's are not. The wise investor will seek to eliminate bad investments, sever ties.

Another characteristic of money is that it is divisible – a one hundred dollar bill can be divided into two fifties, fifties into twenties and tens, and so forth. The *meto* system of exchange is unfamiliar with the notion of divisibility. There is a kind of "all or none" orientation to gift giving where a gift may be a cow, a chicken, or a goat, but never a side of beef or some thighs of chicken. For the investor, the only value of Naususu was dependent on the rock's divisibility; it had to be divided into blocks of marble in order to have value. But none of the farmers in Mollo, neither those for nor those against the mining, had a concept of Anjaf-Naususu's worth as a measurable quantity of rock. Indeed, there is no word in *uab meto* for marble. This may be one reason it never occurred to them to negotiate a contract on the basis of "piece" work, e.g., to establish exchange of labor or the marble itself in terms of so many *rupiah* per cubic meter or ton of marble. Instead, the agreement was for the investor to have unlimited mining rights to the entire mountain,[264] presumably until no more marble was left, in exchange for certain forms of individual and community remuneration. The terms of exchange with the government were different. The investor had to pay so many *rupiah* per cubic meter of marble to the government, albeit a pittance compared to the market value of marble (Chapter 2). However, I do not have details on the mechanisms of this exchange so do not know whether government officials were involved in measuring marble before it was shipped, whether the government received a lump sum based on extraction estimates, or remuneration to the government was some combination of the above.[265]

---

[264] The contract actually specified rights to three mountains, none of which is called Naususu. See Chapter 2, p. 59, n. 71 for a discussion of how this was likely a case of intentional misrepresentation.

[265] Based on conversations with other activists, government officials, and farmers from several villages in Mollo where marble has been and continues to be extracted, Ana has the impression that a mining company pays the government a lump sum up front based on extraction estimates. It is possible this lump sum is paid as a sort of advance and then further taxes are paid based on actually marble extracted.

The contract between the investor and local representatives (Ben and the former TTS *Bupati*) itself highlights distinctions between orality and literacy (Ong, 1982). I do not know what oral stages the contract went through before it reached the final written stage, but once written on paper, the contract took on a qualitatively different nature than the oral expressions that accompany *meto* exchange. Within a *meto* understanding of exchange, the written nature of the contract would be constricting. Writing narrows possibilities for interpretation, leaving little space for spontaneous embellishment, performance, or for verbal parrying, all considerable values in *meto* practices of exchange.[266]

Of all the economic violations perpetrated, however, perhaps the one most directly felt was disruption to traditional means of food security for some farmers. I have no data to support or deny an oft-repeated doomsday prediction I heard from resisters who enjoyed speculating on the difficulties that would be faced by farmers who earned a salary by working for the mining company once the company pulled out. It was common knowledge that the farmers who worked at the mine had no time to attend to their fields. It was imagined that, if the company withdrew and those on its payroll were no longer paid, then the farmers-turned-miners would have no food. The mining company, by creating opportunities for wage labor, and the government, by promoting them, shift the locus of food security for some farmers from dependency on the land to dependency on a wage. This shift in the material means of production had serious ramifications for the

[266] I am reminded of Gordon's (1995) description of a participatory research and literacy program among Puerto Rican women in New York City that was highly self-conscious in dealing with issues of agency, the redistribution of educational privilege, and sites of identity construction. She quotes George Marcus who says that cultural authority rests more on oral modes of communication...than on print media. She goes on to point out that this project was "in...pursuit of women's own effort to define citizenship in cultural rather than legal terms" (p. 377).

cultural identity of people and their communities who have survived for centuries as susbsistence farmers. It is also why, quite simply, the refusal to work for the mining company was a multiple form of resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu, to the economic system that undergirds it, and to the erasure of identity.

Telling this story, I have come to better understand what a movement for the revitalization of *adat* entails and what it means. Ong's maxim about orality, "You know what you can recall" (1982, p. 33), means that cultural reproduction must happen all the time. It is different than picking up a book, skimming parts of it, and putting it on a shelf for future reference. It means that all the books on the shelf must be actively read all the time because that is the only way to know what they say and mean. For *adat* in all its forms – epistemological, cultural, and economic – to live again, re-vitalize, means to recreate *adat* by practicing it. I witnessed and experienced the revitalization of *adat* not so much as a movement of nostalgia as the creation of alternatives for the future. Another thing I have come to understand is that the real resistance for these hill people is not a one-off event, but a way of life. The path they walk in their bid for life is guided by values and perspectives often opposed to the dominant values and perspectives of the nation-state. To follow their paths through the forests and fields, to farm the land of their forebears, to listen to them rehearse oral histories and pray, is to learn that these things become resistance when modern political, economic, and cultural institutions coercively block farmers' paths or line them with consumer goods.

To shift the understanding of resistance away from its more pro-active forms toward thinking about it as a way of life draws attention more specifically to subsistence agriculture as the material and cultural foundation of life for the farmers of North Mollo.

Farming is the essence of identity for the vast majority of villagers in NTT. To learn what this means is to learn that resistance and identity are intimately linked and gives us the power to translate the often pejorative connotations of subsistence farming into resistance farming.

CHAPTER 6

RESISTANCE FARMING AND OTHER STUFF ABOUT LEARNING

The development discourse's conceptualization of people as "empty," in need of food to fill their bellies, inputs such as seeds, tools, and livestock to fill their villages and fields, loans to fill their bank accounts, and civilization to correct their primitiveness, has its parallel in what Freire has called the banking approach to education in which students are treated as empty containers to be filled with deposits of knowledge, detached from reality, by the teacher. "Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry" (Freire, 1968, p. 58). In West Timor, this cultural dimension of development, whereby objects of conquest are necessarily rendered ignorant, had its roots in an earlier colonial discourse as expressed through Christianity. Middlekoop (1960), a Dutch missionary who did extensive research on what he called natural religion in Timor, writes about Christian attitudes of scorn towards traditional beliefs: "When we arrived in Timor in 1922, there were Church ministers who felt themselves far superior to the non-Christians, whom they used to call 'stupid people'. This attitude of superiority was transmitted also to the members of the local Church" (p. 116).

Indeed, for as long as I have known Grandpa Sarus, the old Kune patriarch, he has repeatedly announced to anyone who will listen, "*Kami orang bodoh.*" ("We are stupid people.") Making this announcement for the umpteenth time to some guest or activist who had come to visit, I was tempted to dismiss him, "There he goes again." But in time I learned he was using this phrase to establish otherness, to distinguish "us" from "them" according to a boundary line of knowledge where the "us" in the hills of Mollo are stupid

to the world and knowledge of the "them" from beyond Mollo. I persevered, kept discovering all the things and ways of knowing of the *meto* people, kept listening to his repeated assertion, until I learned his code: "We aren't really stupid, but since outsiders assume we are, we'll pretend and say we are. That way we'll have a mask behind which we can keep what we know to ourselves and so protect something of our cultural autonomy." Even though his statement about being stupid falls somewhere between othering (we don't know what you, the other, knows) and sly resistance (we aren't interested in all the things you know), its effectiveness rests in playing to a development hegemony that assumes unschooled people to be ignorant.[267]

The heavy description of the previous chapters shows why I take such exception to assumptions about needs and ignorance, naiveté and vulnerability, of *masyarakat adat*. It also shows the depth of analysis and insight possible through sustained, even if only partial, membership in a particular community of resistance. Although such thickness may challenge thinner understandings of the "local,"[268] the pedagogical points I want to make based on this ethnographic study of resistance go a bit further. To get to those points, I begin with a review of some things, "stuff," I learned in different ways and at different times along the way.

---

[267] "Finally, the questionable meaning of the public transcript suggests the key roles played by disguise and surveillance in power relations. Subordinates offer a performance of deference and consent while attempting to discern, to read, the real intentions and mood of the potentially threatening powerholder. As the favorite proverb of Jamaican slaves captures it, 'Play fool, to catch wise'." (Scott, 1990, p. 3)

[268] Common practices of advocacy and development, where "professionals" (and others whose lives are tuned to global mobility) who go "into the field" for weeks, months, maybe even years (but seldom more than four or five) are primarily budget oriented, determined, motivated, and dependent, make "thick" understanding difficult.

While researching and writing this project, I occasionally tracked what I learned. For example, I noted I was learning to be sensitive to a different time orientation: "There seems to be *kairos*[269] at work – a certain number of events and people need to be in certain places before some things can happen" (journal entry, August 26, 1999).[270] The journal entry continues, reminding me I was learning not to underestimate the emotional and psychological power of magic and curses, and that I wanted to heal the insiders's chip on my shoulder that I would sometimes flash at younger activists who so often irritated me.

Other notes along the way made it to my laptop where I collected them under broad topical umbrellas. One under the THINGS I LEARNED heading reads, "I have learned when and how to be a student...and not just garner information from others whom my context would identify as uneducated. [I have] learned to see individuals as mentors, not just as informants. I have also learned better about when and how to be a teacher." In retrospect I realize that much of what I tried as "teacher" was a matter of improvisation, trying to discover what worked in that context at that time. A few examples serve to more closely illustrate how I improvised my role as simultaneous teacher and learner.

Most of the oral history sessions I attended and recorded followed a similar pattern. An initial period of informal discussion, in which the men would prompt each

---

[269] *Kairos* is a Greek word used in the New Testament that means time fulfilled, that moment when eternity erupts in history. Here I use the term more loosely to mean the quality of time rather than chronological time.

[270] I remember thinking several times that for people to gather to do something other than build a new round house or go work in a distant field was like waiting for stars to line up a certain way. For all I know, that's what the people I waited on and with might have been doing. It never occurred to me to try to find out at the time.

other to recall the history completely and in order, would be followed by a prayer and then an official recitation. There was usually consensus among those present as to who should recite. However, the "warm-up" session of one such recitation at which a large number of men had gathered was particularly heated. In the end, two men recited their version of the history and everyone was satisfied, but watching the men bicker and bargain over who begat whom during the warm-up session, I saw an opportunity to contribute something of my own that, I thought, might be a useful tool in service of their struggle. My difficulty in understanding as I listened to their historical recitation was not only a problem of language (ritual speech differs from everyday language), but also the fact that I had to rely primarily on my aural sense. My comprehension is so shaped by literacy, plus my aging ears have trouble catching sounds at some registers, that it is often difficult for me to understand something fully apart from textual aids, what more in a foreign language.

For the men I observed, however, getting their historical record straight was a matter of continually negotiated consensus rather than of written record. It was only I, the schooled outsider in their midst, who felt the need for a text to read. This, I thought, would help me better understand the family ties that had come to play such a central role in the farmers' resistance. Who did or did not have a right to hand over Anjaf-Naususu to

an outside investor was, it seemed, primarily a matter of genealogy,[271] and so began my experimentation with charting a local one.[272]

After the formal recitations were completed, I took advantage of the many people present to ask questions as I quickly drew lines connecting names to other names. Who married whom? Who were their children? Who was this king's first wife? Who were his second and third? Although the genealogy recited and sketched that day (and elaborated on in days to come) was weighted in favor of male ancestors,[273] I discovered a tool that proved to be an excellent door for opening other kinds of conversations. I began to carry this genealogical chart with me whenever I went out to interview people.[274] In this way I was able to simultaneously cross check information from different sources as well as expand the genealogy, since different families knew different branches of this growing family tree.[275]

---

[271] Mignolo (2000) writes about the "purity of blood" principle as at first a religious and then a racial foundation for coloniality, arguing that race was an invention of nineteenth-century Europe. Race too played a role in resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu. As mentioned earlier, there were at least two issues put forward by those who questioned Ben's rights to relinquish Anjaf-Naususu. One was his status as the illegitimate son of the last accepted king of North Mollo. The other issue was his status as Chinese and not of *meto* descent. These issues are represented on the genealogical chart.

[272] I had access to only one book (Schusky, 1972) that teaches how to chart genealogies. It was useful for some things, but I could not find an explanation for how to mark polygamy, a common relationship among the Mollo kings whose lives I was charting. Neither have I had any significant experience tracing my own family's roots. What I produced, then, was a crude chart based on my own method.

[273] I continually asked for the names of the kings' mothers and wives, but these were often more debated than the names of the kings.

[274] I later painstakingly transferred the information to a computer drawing program, not the most conducive for a genealogical form. The original chart, however, was drawn on large pieces of butcher paper barely held together by cheap, sticky tape. I used black for the men's names, red for women's, but always had to explain to people I interviewed how to read it. It inevitably generated lively discussion about ancestry.

[275] Nearly a year after I left my field research in Lelobatan, I learned from those who carried on the struggle to stop the mining that Ben's legitimacy was indeed being questioned, now by government officials, and that one official had asked to see a printed genealogy. However, this line of resistance has not yet been pursued.

I came to understand my role in the anti-mining struggle as that of intellectual mediator, such as it was in my peripheral position to the community as a researcher who continued to be caught up in the daily drama of prayer curses, spying, dirty money, monkey's protests,[276] dreams, and more. To mediate between the strategies of the NGOs and the farmers did not interest me, indeed such a role seemed inappropriate. Where I imagined myself to mediate was between different worldviews with their different ways of knowing. I wanted to make comprehensible what the farmers knew about family relations, history, and land in a hermeneutical context other than their own. Besides the genealogical chart, I also experimented with the collection and creation of maps. The results were mostly dismal. Despite my best efforts, I found no good maps of the Anjaf-Naususu region. I suspect the TTS Department of Mining had some, but the only ones I was shown were not particularly useful. Although the Provincial Development Planning Bureau's Zoning Office had the best topographical maps available,[277] a map for the one section of land covering Lelobatan and Anjaf-Naususu was not available. At first I refused to believe it because there were maps for almost all other sections of North Mollo. But it was true. Whether by circumstance or design, a map of that particular area had either not yet been produced or not yet distributed by the central government, as both the Zoning Office and a NGO with experience in GPS mapping confirmed.[278] Hopes of

---

[276] Several resistance stories that circulated related to behavior of the monkeys driven from Anjaf-Naususu once the mining began. One especially popular one had a "patriarch" monkey emerging and scolding the investor before disappearing into the woods followed by a number of monkey escorts. Such stories had a myth-like quality to them.

[277] These maps, printed in 1993 (one is from 1999) on a scale of 1:25.000, are based on aerial photos of the early 1980s that were shot on a 1:50.000 scale.

[278] GPS or Global Positioning System is a way to map locations very precisely. GPS satellites transmit microwave signals that can be detected by anyone with a GPS receiver to determine his or her exact location on Earth.

producing my own GPS map were never realized,[279] and despite repeated efforts trying to produce maps based on compass readings, I finally had to admit I did not have the training I needed to do that well. The most useful maps I managed to collect were ones sketched by one of my research assistants who always drew them in consultation with local informants. The sketch map of Anjaf-Naususu, that includes locations of springs and historic sites (Figure 2, Chapter 2, p. 54), clearly shows what was at stake both ecologically and culturally and was used primarily by activists beyond the village to educate each other about the case.[280]

Some of the stuff I did and learned along the way was clearly related to direct efforts to resist the mining, but much of it was not. As explained in Chapter 1, while in the village I still had my sights set on "learning the land" as developed in my dissertation proposal, not on a study of resistance. If some of the documentation I gathered could assist those who protested the mining, all the better, but resistance did not directly guide my research at the time. What I see now is that some of my activities fit into a long view of resistance where support for subsistence agriculture as a way of life becomes

---

[279] Although I understood how GPS worked theoretically, I needed someone to teach me and the farmers of Lelobatan how to use the receivers. I also thought it important that, if possible, a fellow Timorese be our teacher. I was elated when I discovered a group of NGO friends had offered GPS training locally the year before I returned to Timor. A young man in a village about two hours from Lelobatan had participated in the training and excelled. However, because I had not budgeted any money for him, and because he was asking exorbitant rates for his services, Papa Tius and others in Lelobatan had no interest in working with him. I was disappointed that my dreams for participatory learning of GPS tools and map construction depended on a young man who closely guarded his knowledge for the economic and social power it gave him. When push came to shove, I opted to let this particular hi-tech tool of modernity lie.

[280] Sketch maps were also drawn of the various hamlets of Lelobatan showing each person's home. I taped these maps to a wall in Papa Tius's and Mama Maria's house and many a visitor enjoyed looking at where he or she lived. To have a textual representation of people's place on the earth seemed to be an important affirmation of their identity. That farmers could take pride in these maps, not because they had produced them, but because they showed their names and where they live, suggests the rich possibilities available in sharing skills and tools back and forth between different worldviews, I would add, as long as there is parity and the exchanges are mutual. Fortmann's (1996) account of resource mapping is particularly inspiring.

resistance in the face of projects and worldviews that seek to change it. One of the documentation projects I initiated in my efforts to "learn the land" was squeezed in at the end of my formal period of research. After a two month disruption brought about by the presence of East Timor militia roaming West Timor, I returned to Lelobatan. My experience during the months away had left me traumatized, and it showed.[281]

Despite tapes full of recorded interviews, rolls of developed film, tens of sketch maps, documents collected on local history, and a journal full of notes, I had neither the psychological nor emotional space needed to review all my data so didn't realize, or perhaps didn't trust, what I already had. The main thing I worried about when I returned to Lelobatan in November 1999 was a seeming lack of hard data related to ideas I had set out in my proposal. Because my experiments with mapping had mostly failed, I let go of vague ideas about social cartography rather than pursue them. Ideas about having youth take photos of places that meant something to them also hadn't worked. I really didn't know what I had to say about learning the land in Lelobatan, yet felt a moral obligation to ideas put forward in my proposal because I had obtained research funding on the basis of them.

When I returned to the village for one last effort to bring something to closure, it was with some panic that I sought a way to be responsible to the proposal. Continuing in improvisational style, now accompanied by an edge of desperation ("What do I have to show after all these months in Lelobatan? What am I to do about all the proposal ideas I never realized?"), I designed a survey and trained a group of young people in Lelobatan

[281] The months away from the village were spent translating eye witness accounts by pro-independence refugees of the horrors they had witnessed in East Timor (and spilling over into West Timor) following the referendum, hiding pro-independence refugees in our home, and "evacuating" to Bali for several weeks.

to help administer it. My borderline panic made me more reckless than usual. With no training in statistical surveys – how to develop, conduct, and interpret results – I followed my nose and then some. The survey gathered information about history, varieties of basic food crops such as corn, rice, bananas, and cassava and local medicines (trying to develop a picture of local biodiversity), how people made decisions about farming, what was seen as ideal work, and how local knowledge was transmitted to younger generations.

Besides its excessive breadth, another flaw of the survey was that it was in Indonesian. The crucial step of translating it into *uab meto* was left up to each team member who, over a period of about six weeks, "interviewed" 20-30 people each, filling in the survey formats as they went along. Abilities of the team members varied a great deal. The less literate ones left many essay questions blank. Some misinterpreted the information sought, even though we reviewed each question on the survey several times.[282] I was overwhelmed when more than 200 surveys were finally returned and, although the information on them is often partial and sometimes off the mark, there is much, to date undigested data for future use.[283]

The one idea I was really committed to, in part because I had carried it with me so many years, was the planning and execution of what I called a "cultural festival."

---

[282] For example, questions related to how knowledge about treating illnesses or using forest resources should be taught to children were invariably answered as if the question were seeking recipes. "What's the best way to teach children how to prepare village medicine?" "If you have an upset stomach, bake a green banana and eat it. That will help."

[283] After leaving Lelobatan a second time at the end of 1999, I returned to work on "refugee" issues, spending at least a year and a half with a local women's group that documented violence against women in West Timor refugee camps and providing an English-language email service related to refugee news from West Timor. By the time I revisited my data from Lelobatan, the urgency to "just start writing" meant I didn't take time to synthesize findings from the surveys.

Inviting participation of older teenagers and young adults from the extended Kune family, I formed yet another team with whom I met several times prior to the festival. Festival participants were 50-60 grade school children from the Heum hamlet who were "tested" during the festival to see who had the best "cultural knowledge." Moving from post to post – some just for boys, some just for girls, some for both – the girls were "tested" on their ability to weave mats from grass and belts from thread, spin cotton thread, and carry grain baskets on their heads; the boys on their ability to tie grass onto laths (a skill for building roofs on traditional thatched huts), ability to draw their families' cattle brand, and how to blow a *feku*, the traditional whistle for calling cattle. All were asked history questions, to identify varieties of forest vine, to select the best seed corn from a mixture of seeds, and to dance. The children also hiked about a kilometer where they planted some bamboo in the hopes of slowing a large landslide.

The children were divided into age groups and accompanied from post to post by members of the team. Village elders who had agreed to serve as jury members sat at each post to "judge" the children who performed before them. However, if a child did not have a skill or know the answer to a question, the judge became a teacher giving the child or children an on-the-spot, rudimentary lesson. When all posts had been visited and the bamboo planted, the children were brought together for a final "ceremony," in which the winners of each age group were announced and prizes given. The festival was fun to plan and even more fun to observe. It seemed a resounding success, but I knew from experience that were it to become an annual event (another part of my dream), more planning and discussion about "sustainability" would be needed. If reports I have received are true, the festival *has* continued, admittedly at my urging, but already it has

taken on different forms with different purposes. One year some activities from the first festival were repeated but others added, such as the recitation of Bible verses and how to fold clothes neatly![284] Another year the festival was merged with a children's Christmas celebration with hardly any "local knowledge" content. And when the issue of what to do about prizes arose, I regretted to have been the one who purchased them for the first festival. Opportunities remain for experimenting with ways villagers in Heum can design and manage their own festival if, in fact, they choose to do so.

In reviewing the range of research/learning activities I undertook during my months in Lelobatan, I now wonder if perhaps I was not subconsciously mocking the very protocols of research I sought to practice. I did not take advantage of someone with GPS skills on the basis of "principle," I did not digest the survey data I collected with the excuse it "overwhelmed" me, and I committed the same error I was so quick to see and criticize in others, namely I used "the field" as a testing ground for my own pet project. I had plenty of reasons to call into question my research, participatory and otherwise, and how I went about engaging with it. To posit resistance to injustice as at once pedagogical site and method as well as way of life is what, indirectly, prompts me to put my own research practices under the microscope, even now two to three years after the fact.

Certainly I learned some things from the research methods I tried and the activities I initiated. There are things I want to try again, want to improve upon together with friends and family in Lelobatan in support of the revitalization of *adat*. But these things are "stuff" to try in my role as researcher and adult nonformal education teacher.

---

[284] It's quite possible the suggestion about folding clothes came from Papa Tius or Mama Maria as they had observed me teaching the young children in their household how to fold clothes one time when it was raining outside and I was looking for something "constructive" to do with the children.

It is stuff that for me falls around the periphery of meaning. Of the many lessons I learned during my extended time in Lelobatan, one helped nudge me closer to new understanding: The collection and interpretation of data is only one of many ways to "get at" what is meaningful.

By the time I finally got around to writing, began to perform this soliloquy, I had all my data, maps, and recordings close at hand, but they were like reassuring props. I used them to help me remember the script, to help me right myself when the stage was dark and I tripped, but I also tried not to bump into them blindly or keep me from imagining the stage in its entirety. By the time I was able to freely take some distance from the clutches of my dissertation proposal to consider some new sets, I had begun to think about meanings of resistance and kept coming back, not to my data, but to my lived experiences working the land. Maybe it's the kinesthetic learner in me or because I have fond memories of playing in the mud as a child or because my first paid job was detasseling corn that creates for me an affinity with manual field labor. Whatever it is, I thank the gods, goddesses, and ancestors that I have no aversion to it because the most important lessons I learned came over time as I farmed alongside the men and women with whom I lived and ate. As these friends would say, we *raba tanah*, felt the earth, as we farmed.[285] For this last scene, I leave the stage for rice and corn fields.

---

[285] The Indonesian word *raba* can mean to feel something or to grope, often with sexual implications. Although I do not develop it here, it is worth noting that several of my journal entries about farm labor connote something of the sensual nature of the experience. For example, I write that digging for potatoes is like searching [groping] for eggs of different sizes and shapes nestled in warm, little subterranean nests (May 18, 1999).

Resistance Farming

Working in the fields, day after day, my identity began to shift from activist intellectual to farmer and I felt myself learning more essential lessons than Ben's heritage and varieties of forest medicine. It was in the fields that my education in *meto* values began to feel whole. A journal entry written only a month after I arrived in Lelobatan reminds me that my immersion into this subsistence farming way of life was total:

> Gloomy drizzle has blown to bright gray and all I want is to bathe. We finished off [harvesting] the Nefonaik field and "broke camp" yesterday. I rolled over in my sleep maybe once last night and woke up contemplating the impact of years of the kind of exhausting labor I've experienced for only one week. Yesterday as I was carrying a big sack of corn and rice on my head up the hill to the edge of the field where the horses were tethered, I imagined the vertebrae in my neck were scrunching together and I could feel certain back muscles strain as never before. I could not have managed that sack all the way home – at least not without frequent breaks. And I wonder about those who did carry their loads, on their heads and backs, all the way back, all the way uphill.
>
> I was given Papa Tius's largest black horse to ride – a real beauty, but a sore hoof made him slow. I carried back two clans of corn[286] strapped across my thighs, one hanging down on each side of the horse, and had little trouble until it got dark. After the blankets slipped out from under me twice in short order I gave up on them and rode bareback which allowed me to keep pulling myself forward on the uphill stretches, but the effort has left me with extremely tender thighs and genitals.
>
> May 5, 1999

Mies and Shiva (1993) synthesize spiritual and political ecofeminism discourses to talk about the need for a subsistence perspective "which starts from the fundamental necessities of life" (p. 20). They see this materialism as an alternative to Marxism and capitalism that they believe are both grounded in a distorted relationship to nature that transforms the sacredness of the earth into dead commodities. They go on to say that women are nearer to this perspective than men. Although I disagree with their feminist

---

[286] To move corn from the field to the round house for storage, the outer dry husk is drawn back from each ear, then the ears were tied together, first in groups of three, then nine, then 18, and finally 36 to form what is called a *suku* or clan.

essentialism, I endorse their position that a subsistence perspective is vital to the future of the planet. What that perspective means to me is not just respect for subsistence agriculture,[287] but integration of it into my own practices of everyday life for it is through the practice, not through an out-of-body experience, that I have best learned the ethic that informs it.

The reason I privilege this "subsistence ethic" is because when our awareness, knowledge, and experience of direct, material dependence on the land is broken, so too is our organic relationship to it. Once the organic link is missing, the chain of sustainability also breaks apart. Subsistence farming is more than just a metaphor to disrupt assumptions embedded in discourses of development and modernity. It is also the site and means for the formation of an ethics of subsistence. I do not know if this ethic can be learned in other ways, but I have learned something about it, first by observing subsistence farming, then more completely by practicing it. It's like learning to swim. You can learn some things about swimming by watching someone else swim, but the only way to know how to swim is to get into the water. The only way to fully know and appreciate the ethics of subsistence is to "get into" subsistence farming, for that is the

---

[287] Freudenberger (1984) has defined agriculture in this way: "Agriculture refers to a dynamic human process of combining the energies of the sun with the chemistry of the soil, vegetation, and animals, in the production of food and fiber for the purpose of making possible the indefinite development of the potentiality of human life in community" (p. 96). Agriculture is meaningful only insofar as value and purpose are made part of the process. I understand the adjective subsistence to be a discursive weapon that transforms traditionally sustainable forms of agriculture in which there is an "integrated diversity of plants and animals in the cropping system" (Freudenberger, 1984, p. 129) into a pejorative concept of inadequate farming because there is only enough produce to feed one's family; there is no market surplus. The discourse of subsistence agriculture has often been used to promote "capital- and chemical-intensive technologies for monocultural production" (p. 129). Tempting as it is to launch a counter-discursive attack by boycotting the term subsistence agriculture as a construct created by the development discourse – to use terms like sustainable agriculture or small family farming – I have retained the term. I do this in part because subsistence agriculture/farming connotes certain regional contexts (non-Western), and in part because I believe it is possible to "write against" dominant pejorative connotations of the word without changing it (see also discussion of *sistere* below, p. 26).

gate that leads to other epistemological, cultural, and economic domains of which I have had only a few glimpses.[288]

Of all the people I know in North Mollo, Grandpa Sarus's oldest brother, Grandpa Musa, seems the least attached to modernity and its institutions. When I first read about organic nature (Escobar, 1999, February), I was reminded of Grandpa Musa for how he relates to the land. He must be close to 80 years old by now, but he still works and lives in his garden, indeed is lost without one. Members of his extended family often treat him as if he were senile because of his seasonal wandering from household to household, and because he refuses to sleep in a bed (he can only sleep wrapped in his *selimut* on the ground).

Some years ago when he wandered into Papa Tius's and Mama Maria's hamlet, they offered him a plot of land to farm not far from their house. During a visit to Papa Tius and Mama Maria that year, I heard about how old, crazy Grandpa Musa had showed up and was now living in his garden, so I went to have a peek. It was like no other field I had ever seen. Living, breathing space, it was as if the land had taken on a personality all its own. Grandpa Musa was nowhere in sight, but his *selimut* was draped flag-like around a branch set atop a large rock, a sign he was beseeching the sky god to "tie the

---

[288] In defending standpoint theory from critics who confuse it with a kind of ethnocentrism, Harding (1993) argues that standpoint theorists do not insist that the starting point for thinking is from their own lives, but rather from the lives of marginalized groups. Such starting points on the journey to produce knowledge generate important questions about the social order that, she argues, provide stronger standards for objectivity. She points out that "thinkers with 'center' identities" such as Hegel, Marx, and Engels "were not engaged in the kind of labor that they argued provided the starting point for developing their theories about class society" (p. 59). To be engaged in such labor may not be necessary in order to be a standpoint theorist, but, I would argue, it helps. Whatever important questions standpoint theory raises about social order are deepened and complicated once that theory has become embodied in the life of the theorist. I argue it is not only the ability to "think how social life works from the perspective of their [marginalized] lives" (p. 79, no. 35), but to experience that social life by sharing all aspects of it. This is more than just trying to theorize a material base to solidarity, although it is that. To understand this other way of life was to learn with my body as well as my mind that our lives depend on working the land together.

rain" for awhile so the sunshine could have a chance to balance the heavy rains falling at the time. Expanse had been traded for intensity so that the plot of land he had turned, although relatively small by *meto* standards, was incredibly fertile. There were the inevitable signs of slash and burn, but they were minimal, and the soil was so well worked, the terraces so well and closely laid, the planting of crops around large stones and trees left in place was so balanced that to experience this garden was aesthetic. Such fertile farming is rare, indeed most *meto* farmers would say it is not feasible. To insure harvests large enough for their families, they must farm large tracts of land, something that does not allow cultivation as intensive as that in Grandpa Musa's garden. For the same reason, most farmers prefer to completely clear a field rather than leave trees in place, allowing re-growth only when they move to another field.[289] Some might say Grandpa Musa just has a knack for farming, a Mollo green thumb if you will. I say he is exceptionally tied to the values of a subsistence ethic. Freed from necessity, he gardens with his heart.

From my perspective as a farmer, I understand recognition, rehearsal, and reciprocity not only as weapons in a resistance arsenal, but as fundamental values an ethics of subsistence teaches. I have already written about land as hard disk, inscribed with historical and cultural meaning (Chapter 5). Farming highlights other aspects of recognition as farmers learn the land not only in terms of its socio-cultural significance,

---

[289] Already in the mid-1950s, Ormeling (1956) wrote about the problem of deforestation, pointing out that east monsoon winds carry seasonal slash and burn fires into forested areas surrounding fields so that areas consumed by fire exceed that which is actually cultivated. The slopes of the mountains mentioned in Chapter 4, Mt. Mutis, Mt. Mollo, Mt. Miomafo, and Mt. Bi Kekneno are regularly burned off to a great height. He also points to the need for wood as fuel, fence-building, and increased population and cattle pressures as contributing to deforestation. Although swidden agriculture produces one set of crops (corn, rice, peanuts, cassava) and forests another (a variety of tree crops, coffee, hot peppers), the loss of the latter may put a greater strain on the former.

but also in terms of its agro-cultural significance. They learn practical stuff, "traditional environmental knowledge" stuff, like how to distinguish between edible and poisonous mushrooms, what medicines can be found where, what plants do well in what soils, which fields will receive what amounts of sun at what times of year, which people have a proven track record when it comes to sowing in such a way that will guarantee a plentiful harvest. But perhaps the deeper act of recognition relates to community as the link between culture and agriculture. Although much farm labor is done alone,[290] the heaviest work, e.g., hefting rocks or large tree branches to build fences and harvesting, is almost always done in groups. To work the land together is to recognize that survival depends on communal labor, and that one's self is bound to that community of labor.[291] Farmers, then, "recognize" community into being through labored enactments of it.[292]

---

[290] For me this sometimes fostered unique communion with the land. To work in a large, open field for hours on end with no one around and hardly anyone passing by are conditions for focusing attention and reflection in certain ways, perhaps not unlike what is discovered through various forms of spiritual discipline.

[291] Journal entry, May 2, 1999:

> There is a daily routine that goes something like this, at least during heavy harvest: individuals gather at the house and seem to wile away an hour or two before heading for the *lele* [garden], but what, in fact, they are doing...is getting themselves "primed" both physically (they store up heavy on the carbohydrates, eating a late, or second, breakfast of corn) and psychologically. They relax together, shooting the breeze, and then alone, or in twos and threes, they "hit the road" [and reconvene in the field where they put all their energy into hard labor, including the labor required to carry the food harvested back to the house].

[292] Shared entertainment and shared religious experience are also ways to "recognize" community. What makes shared manual field labor different is that it existentially connects community to the land that it works. Yet another topic that goes beyond the scope of this study relates to notions such as "fatherland" or "homeland" in which land and communal identity are intertwined. Discourses that tie ethnic and political identities to place often evoke issues of defense and violence. In the case of East Timor, e.g., militia/ refugees continued to make claims on the future of East Timor (that it should be integrated with Indonesia) long after the referendum because, they argued, they and their forebears had spilled blood there. Ties to the land fostered by community farming may be equally passionate, but the energy is given to cultivation rather than to ideological or physical combat. People plant trees at a friend's home or in memory of someone, and the trees grow into a symbol of community: Papa Tomas's betel nut planted close to Grandpa Sarus's house, a former missionary who planted orange trees in Papa Tius's yard, a coffee bush planted in memory of a legal aid activist here, a banyan tree planted in memory of a well-loved community organizer there, etc.

Farming also taught me something about rehearsal as repetition. I observed closely, trying to mimic the motions of farming – one arm up and down, again and again, thrusting the digging stick into the soil, the other hand in and out, in and out of the shoulder basket, grabbing a handful of seeds and dropping a few at a time into each hole, shoving the little mound of dirt from the digging stick back over the filled holes with a foot, for hours up and down a hillside; or upper body movement as it bows slightly down to cut off the head of ripened rice with a small knife, then swaying back up, sticking the rice in a shoulder bag, bringing eyes to focus on the next ripened head; or the repeated piston-like motion of those two or three who stand around a tall wooden mortar, legs together, long slick wooden rods held tightly in both hands raised high above the head and then brought down full force with a slight squat at the knees as the arms come down to add more force, back always erect, taking turns around and around, pounding the corn in the mortar to remove its outer skin, as if pounding a Timorese drum.[293]

What some anthropologists see as systems of indigenous knowledge, Richards (1993) reads as improvisational coping strategies that respond to conditions of a certain time and place, identifying cultivation as performance rather than knowledge. His distinction between rehearsal, as the agriculture practiced in research stations out of time and place, and performance, as real practices that must exist in specific times and places, is useful for its critique of mainstream agricultural research. However, as suggested in the previous chapter, I use the term rehearsal not in the sense of preparing for the eventual perfect performance, but take my clue from the word's etymology.

---

[293] West Timor cuisine, such as it is, is known for its *jagung bose*, corn that has had its outer skin removed, is boiled, and then simmered with coconut milk.

The meaning of rehearsal as re-harrowing is literally appropriate to subsistence agriculture in which the land is worked over again and again to break up large clumps of rock-hard dirt into smaller, smoother soil to enhance fertility. In this sense, the word rehearsal connotes images of endless, often tedious repetition demanded by many phases of subsistence agriculture. But used metaphorically, rehearsal gives insight into an ethics of subsistence that suggests other kinds of repetition, e.g., the rehearsal of community through repeated enactments of it.

In North Mollo, families and communities come together again and again to rehearse, harrow again, the land and their direct engagement with it. They do not just recognize their identity as family and community, but also rehearse it, refining hard relations to make them soft enough that people are able to work side by side in the field, field by field, rehearsing and making fine the ethics of subsistence.[294] Conceptually situated here between recognition and reciprocity, rehearsal provides the social bridge that links *epistéme/techne*[295] to its material base.

The means of production in subsistence agriculture depend on the equilibrium inherent in the many cycles of give and take that constitute subsistence farming. In swidden agriculture, there are cycles of cultivating land and leaving it fallow.[296]

---

[294] Land disputes are among the most bitter of any in West Timor, and they are not just between villagers and outside land grabbers. Many clan and village tensions are rooted in disputes over farmland that results, in part, from the rotating system of swidden agriculture. If one year a family who claims a plot of land decides to leave it fallow, that sometimes becomes the occasion for another family to try to claim it by cultivating it. The *meto* system of adjudication, including curses, is still called upon to address such disputes, sometime on its own, sometimes as supplement to government approaches.

[295] I agree with Richards (1993) when he writes about the strict segregation between *epistéme* (conceptual, abstract thinking) and *techne* (practical skills) as a characterization of knowledge in western society. "...I see no reason why anthropologists should continue to stigmatize cultivators with an intellectual dichotomy redolant of the class-based parochialism of later-Victorian imperialists" (p. 61).

[296] This cycle is determined in part on distance of the field from the hamlet. Papa Tius, Mama Maria, and other family members work large plots of corn and rice far from the hamlet for only one season

Cultivation, in turn, consists of an extended cycle – slash and burn, fence building, turning the soil, planting, weeding, harvesting – whose timing is determined by decisions balanced between past experience and approximate readings of the weather in any given year.[297] Agricultural cycles determine social cycles – periods of physically exhausting field work are followed by periods of lighter work (branding cattle, weaving, roof repairs) when there is time for social events. Thus, an annual church event to celebrate the Protestant Reformation and the founding of an independent Protestant Church in Timor falls just prior to the planting season; "wedding season" tends to fall between the harvest of secondary crops (June-July) and the most intense period of slash and burn (late September, early October).

This cyclical aspect of agricultural reciprocity was once symbolically represented by a large round stone called *bak-bak* located at the "heart" of the field, as opposed to the uphill "head" and the downhill "feet." One of the important values agricultural reciprocity teaches is spiritual humility. Farmers do what they can to guarantee food security – they observe the lessons of their youth, give respect to the ancestors and God, work as hard as they can to prepare the land well, fence it well, choose the seed well, weed well. But there are points beyond which farmers cannot go. That is when they

---

and then leave it fallow for four to five years. I know of about four large sites the family works in rotation. Other plots closer to their home and that include cassava (a kind of "food insurance" plant that can remain in the ground up to three years before harvesting) are worked every year, but even then, there is some rotation within the field itself, with some areas being more heavily cultivated one year, and other areas the next.

[297] Farmers must try to interpret nature through each step of the agricultural cycle. E.g., they must interpret whether or not early rains signal the onset of the rainy season or are simply pre-season moisture. If seeds are planted too early they die, too late and the short rainy season is not fully maximized, meaning small harvests that may compromise planting the following year (because of reduced seed available). This is why *meto* farmers do their best to keep three to four year's worth of corn in the attics of their round houses. This corn is rotated during the rainy season, making available the oldest corn to eat during the annual period of food shortage.

must let go, knowing they have done what they can. The guarantee of food upon which their lives depend is not, ultimately in their control, and they are reminded of this on a regular, cyclical basis, not in crisis fashion as the result of death or bankruptcy or destruction of the World Trade Center. A subsistence ethic teaches us very directly that humans are not omnipotent, a lesson that technology sometimes tempts us to forget.

A vivid example of the interplay of recognition, rehearsal, and reciprocity in subsistence farming comes from Mama Debora, now about 60 years old, when she reminisced about harvesting "the traditional way" with her grandmother 50 years ago:

> Everyone had to dress up before going to the field to harvest. Grandmother wore a gold comb in her hair and her strands of beads, one of them had a large gold medallion on it that hung down almost to her navel, and ivory bracelets up to her elbow, and her best *sarong*. She said it was like going to a wedding party and that we had to look happy and dress our best in order to please the hosts and hostesses so they would like us and treat us well. When we arrived at the field, we put the biggest bushel-like basket in the middle on the *bak-bak*, the round, flat stone there. And we would pray to the ancestors, and to *Uis Neno*, and to *Uis Pah*, giving thanks for the harvest. The *bak-bak* was where we could communicate with them. There were lots of taboos, really a lot. We were not allowed to make any noise at all in the fields; that was a sign of reverance. And the whole time we were there – and it could be many days, depending on how big the field was and how many people worked it – no one could bathe or wash their hair. We were not allowed to eat certain raw foods like peanuts or rose apples or *uas*. Eeee, it was as if we were being punished.
>
> There were also rules about how we filled our baskets that we hung from our necks. We would harvest in a row, almost shoulder to shoulder, but we had to move forward through the field together, one couldn't move ahead in front of the others or lag behind the others, so the faster ones had to always help the slower ones. We weren't allowed to stop when our own basket was full, but had to keep working until the baskets of those to the right and left of us were also filled. Eeee, it was such slow work that way. Then we would go together and fill the basket on the *bak-bak*. That had to be filled first and then we were free to eat and drink and talk, but we still couldn't make lots of noise. Then we would harvest some more to fill all the other smaller baskets that had to be filled until the field was empty.
>
> And then we would clean the rice in the field. We would heap it up and remove the seeds from the stalks by walking all over the rice, working it with our

feet, like we still do now. We were not allowed to pour the rice from our flat baskets to let the wind winnow the rice. Grandmother said that was like throwing away our rice to the wind. No, the women had to sit together in a circle and winnow the rice by shaking their baskets, and the rhythm had to be just right, they had to begin shaking their baskets all at the same time and finish all at the same time, no one could be ahead or behind the others. And that is still the way it is done now, except the cleaning is usually at the house and not in the field. And once all the rice was harvested and cleaned and put in baskets, then we prayed together again at the *bak-bak*, remembering our manners to thank the ancestors for protecting the field and giving us a good yield. Then we would leave the field, and walk home in single file, carrying the baskets on our heads. And the line could stretch for a half kilometer, there were that many people who worked in the field, but Grandmother in all her finery, led the way.[298]

October 10, 2002

I do not know any families in Lelobatan or in other North Mollo villages who still plant or harvest their fields as they once did. The influence of Christian evangelization in the early 1900s sent elaborate planting and harvest rituals underground, and Communist purges of the mid-1960s pretty much wiped out all remaining signs of local religion.[299] The reason to recall such practices is because they paint a clear picture of the values that informed them, values that are to some extent still operative today. The current struggle by Ana and some farmers in North Mollo to assert *adat* as a viable option for the future, seeks the revitalization of values as much as practices.

In an interview, Ana, the young woman who organized farmers in North Mollo to resist the mining, mentioned she had formed 53 farmers' groups. When I asked why, her response revealed a border strategy of resistance that seeks to provide farmers with

---

[298] The Grandmother in question was a descendent of a Timorese king. Both her attire and the number of people she and her husband could hire to work in the fields testify to her wealth.

[299] In Timor, the "Good News" of Jesus Christ was inevitably translated to mean "Bad News" for indigenous traditions that were seen as pagan. As explained earlier (Chapter 5), traditional religion also became associated with Communism so that villagers destroyed all signs and symbols of anything that might look suspicious, sometimes throwing their "sacred" objects such as carved statues and amulets, down latrines.

economic leverage by encouraging practices of self-reliance. These practices allow farmers to distance themselves from the market while at the same time encouraging other practices that demand strategic negotiation of the market.

Ana's active participation in resistance to the mining began not long after I left Lelobatan at the beginning of 2000. During the six months prior to sit-ins and demonstrations, she spent much of her time going from village to village, talking with farmers, trying to discern where they stood in terms of the mining. At this time Ana formed the *lulbas*, a communication network that worked something like an oral pony express. At a meeting in 2000, the *lulbas* and village elders set for themselves an agenda of activities. Getting the mining company to shut down its operations was at the top of the list, but there were other projects identified as priorities. One of those was to revitalize North Mollo's *adat* institutions. After the resisters successfully shut down the mining, the community momentum of resistance also died down. But Ana was frustrated: "After the demonstration, the farmers didn't want to be bothered any longer. They thought they had won when in fact they were still in the middle of the struggle."

In an effort to break some patterns of economic dependency, Ana is being ostentatious in her support for "local" products. At one three day meeting of the *lulbas* with farmers from several villages, Ana insisted that those in charge of food bring the poisonous *kot laos* beans from the forest (see Chapter 4, p. 206). These were cooked and available every morning and noon during the meeting. This became part of the group's discussion. Why do people spend money on dried noodles and canned sardines when they can grow and obtain their own food? She has also begun to criticize the shift from grass-thatched houses to the desire for zinc roofs, saying she herself regrets building a

zinc-roofed house. In meetings and conversations with farmers, she explains how the trend towards zinc roofs only makes businesses rich, adding what the farmers themselves know – farmers sleep in their thatched *ume kbubu*, their real homes, because in the high hills of West Timor the zinc houses are too cold.

The effort to break dependencies on outside products does not mean Ana advocates total withdrawal from a cash economy. In fact, she seeks ways to strengthen the local cash economy. For example, she has begun to buy local seeds from farmers in one village to give to farmers in another as a sign to farmers that their own seeds are valuable and to encourage farmers to cut down the purchase of store-bought seeds. She is also making concerted efforts to keep garlic, red beans, chili peppers, and other "traditional" crops from giving way completely to carrots, a more perishable cash crop. She has contacted a buyer to create a guaranteed market for produce grown by the recently formed farmers' groups. Other efforts to support the local economy include replacing public transport by making pack horses available for rent and developing local suppliers of wood and sand to replace the Chinese corner on this market.

Ana says efforts to obtain money are not a strategic answer to the larger issue of defending a way of life but, using a classic development argument, she says if farmers' other needs for food and money aren't addressed, they won't have the energy to be involved in political activities. A group may have income-generation as its purpose, but if they encounter a project coming in that will upset their ecological base, she immediately calls the head of the group to ask when they will be ready to move. She implies the farmers' groups are also a political force, standing by ready to intervene as needed. Considering there are at least 100 other groups that have formed on their own

and reported to Ana beyond the initial 53 she started, this potential is real. At least rhetorically, Ana sees that the more strategic purpose of these groups is to remind the people of North Mollo of their primary identity as farmers and the unity they have in that identity:

> Every day more and more people are looking for money, not by farming, but by trading when in fact from the beginning they have been farmers. They don't feel it, but their sense that they own and love this region is slowly fading away. They don't protest when people want to take their land, all that is important is the price they can get for it. Or when a Bugis[300] wants to come along and build a kiosk on their land by the side of the road. The farmers haven't figured out it would be better if they built their own kiosks. This influences people to hate their own land. They don't think they are farmers who need land in order to live. God gives the breath of live, but the body is dirt. I need to eat and drink from the earth, and when I die they will place me in the earth. I can't go to God all round and whole. So if I don't ask them to return to work the land, they will feel the land doesn't mean anything.
>
> August 18, 2002

As with farmers in their fields who are constantly experimenting in small ways with different seeds and soils, Ana too is experimenting as suggested by seeming contradictions in her attitudes toward subsistence and market economies. Although she continues to explore what it means for individuals and communities to claim their identity as farmers, her skills, family history, and commitments give her unique opportunities to negotiate the many challenges faced by an ethics of subsistence.

To claim farming as resistance carries political intent in the same way the feminist discourse on violence against women does. Feminists have sought to make a political, pedagogical point by broadening connotations of violence against women beyond physical violence to include women's economic marginalization and a wide range of

---

[300] See Chapter 5, p. 312, n. 261.

social and cultural means of controlling and exerting power over women. This semantic effort is essential to a systemic analysis of the problem.

The claim that traditional practices of subsistence farming are a form of resistance likewise broadens the definition of resistance in the Indonesian context beyond separatist movements. It is a discursive effort to wrest political meaning from dominant institutions and place it back where it belongs, among the body politic. To reiterate, when the landscape, worldview, cultural identity, and subsistence values of the *meto* people are confronted by forces that would denigrate and erase them, learning resistance means simply to nurture relationships with the land and with members of one's community. In the face of violence to the earth and violation of values, subsistence becomes resistance.

Etymology is again instructive. These two words have the same Latin root, *sistere*. It is also the root of the word existence and means "to cause to stand firm." To assert that resistance is embodied within subsistence means that "standing firm again" (*re-sistere*) is realized from a standpoint that dominant perspectives have labeled as being below or underneath a state of standing firm (*sub-sistere*). The pejorative connotations of subsistence are erased, opposed through the experience of farming that teaches *sub-sistere* means to stand firm under the land as the ultimately ruling *usif*, a practice that simultaneously and always suggests itself as an act of resistance, standing firm again.

I privilege resistance farming for its emphasis on the agency of the oppressed[301] and for what it teaches about surviving conflict, violence, and multiple layers of

[301] A few examples of agency are recalled from the story at the end of Chapter 4 that *Nenek* Nau tells of the demonstration she observed. Resisting farmers first tell government officials to wait until they have finished eating lunch, then confront the TTS *Bupati* always and only as a descendent of an Amanuban king with no rights to handle affairs in Mollo. Here the agency of the resisters is clear as they define terms of engagement with those whom they confront, not from a distance, but face to face.

violation. For me, learning resistance has meant the discovery and articulation of an ethics of subsistence in which values are primarily learned kinesthetically and tangentially, not pedantically. The pedagogical point of resistance is subsistence farming, and the pedagogical points of subsistence farming taught me that the power to give meaning to time and space, the power to sustain identity, and the power to resist exploitation were not just ideas to contemplate but became embodied through manual labor.

I have learned some things about what it means to be Timorese, to live and work from a subsistence/resistance ethic, by farming alongside *meto* farmers. But, I have learned this in at least one other way. The *bone'* is a hypnotic round dance that farmers dance until dawn a few times a year during a dry season wedding or harvest festival. Anyone not drunk may freely join the circle; drunks are strictly prohibited. The circle begins small and grows as others join. As with the *natoni* that preceeded the oral history recitation in Chapter 4, the song of the *bone'* is antiphonal with one group throwing out a riddle or Bible verse or instructive lesson (depending on the occasion) in song fashion and another group tossing back an appropriate response, performing a reciprocal volleying of slow, methodical call and response for hours and hours and hours. Oh yes, and it is physically intimate.

During all the years I have visited and lived in Lelobatan, never have I experienced such direct, physical contact with both men and women as when joining the *bone'*. The circle, even as it expands, remains closer than shoulder to shoulder. Hands are held with fingers interlocked, arms overlapping, sometimes an upper arm swiping the side of my breast or mine the breast of another as the forward – backward sway would

carry us around and around. The circle rotates by the repeated motion of each individual, in synch, crossing their right leg over and across the left leg of the person standing to the right. In this motion, I would feel, again and again, the left thigh of the person on my right lightly, sensually pressing into the back of the upper right thigh and buttock of my right leg as I crossed it over his or her left leg. Simultaneously I would press my left thigh into the back of the leg of the person to my left who was crossing his/her leg across my left one.

Until I learned the exact rhythm of the motion, I didn't experience the caresses, but when I first did I was a bit shocked. And then I laughed at myself, at my shock, and enjoyed the swaying forward, backward, around and around counter-clockwise, recognizing faces in the circle, trying to learn the song, and reveling in the mystery of how the groups took turns leading the song and how the groups defined themselves. That too seemed to shift with individuals on the periphery of a lead singer moving back and forth between the two singing groups until the lead shifted to someone else, shifting too the constitution of the singing groups. Education, entertainment, sexual affirmation all rolled into one, the beauty and mystery of the *bone'* are a metaphor for *meto* values that set boundaries even as they shift, share leadership in reciprocal style, depend on mutual recognition, and that rehearse identity through intimate, communal song and round dance.

I was not the only one to learn through the experience of resistance to the mining of Anjaf-Naususu, nor the only one to self-consciously situate the farmers as my teachers. Ana too has learned a great deal.

> As for resistance, besides the demonstration, we also wrote a letter refusing the mining, we spoke with decision-makers like members of the TTS People's Assembly, and the Bupati and tried to tell them that we didn't agree with the mining. We prayed. There are Prayer Fellowship groups and because we

know that this world was created by God, God can't just let those who ruin His creation be, so we called the Prayer Fellowship to open the way to help us with prayer. And there was resistance with the use of history, we recited history as another way to oppose the mining. We also opposed through *adat* prayer rituals where we prayed to the ancestors, and we sought to resist by means of nature, asking nature's help, asking demons to help us in our struggle because we know that rocks and trees are actually the home of our ancestors so that if they are taken, where will the ancestors live? We also made medicine curses, not to kill supporters of the mining, but to kill the engines of their machines so they would no longer function and could do no more harm.

Farming is also a kind of resistance. It shows the government that we can get money without ruining the forest and that it has other potentials that are helpful as long as they are protected. We also farm as a way of saying to NGOs that even without them we can also live and carry out our own activities. We also can resist by making a fence around Anfaj-Naususu. That way we can reclaim our land that the Forestry Department scared people away from in 1985.

When I started [to organize the farmers], I had no understanding or experience at all. I walked like a turtle. I didn't have the ability to bring together the *amaf*, didn't even know my own father was an *atoin amaf*. When I had to face a problem in the middle of the journey it was something good for me. I learned a lot from accompanying the farmers. I learned what one has to say when confronting government officials with high rank. I learned how to convince women to speak, even when I'm not there, and how to get them to be part of the *lulbas* so they don't depend on me. The *amaf* are key to influencing the masses, but the *lulbas* are the ones to carry forward some of the ideas we are trying to develop now.

I have studied histories that have been told and have learned to be mature by drawing in village leaders who are already old. I've learned how to convince them I have a heart that loves them very much. I don't differentiate people and try to accept everyone, including those who don't know how to bathe, those feared for their practice of black magic... How do I take their heart? Wherever I go, I carry betul nut. I spend five to ten thousand *rupiah* on sirih, but I never carry any food or candy with me so that if I am hungry, I am hungry in front of them.

And I have learned a lot from my failures. I failed to fence in Naususu because I hadn't yet learned how to draw people together in a tight fellowship. And I failed in my reading of one NGO. I used to think that NGOs were ready to help carry out advocacy, but I learned that was not the case and that we must be careful in our relationship with NGOs. And I failed the first time around in developing the *lulbas*, many of those involved just wanted money. There are still things to learn. I want to learn about agrarian law and study it together with the people so they know their rights to the forest. And we also have plans to collect

historical documents about Mollo and there are some who are very enthusiastic about forming a drama group...

So I've learned that, but I have also taught and learned how to sacrifice. I've learned how to live together with the people, how to suffer with them sleeping in the forest, what to eat when there is no food to be had. During the sit-in, I would look at the farmers, especially the women who had left their homes for days and days. I looked at them sleeping under the stars with no protection from the wind and eating little bits of food off of banana leaves and I would get tears in my eyes. I have learned which two women and one man of the *lulbas* love this region so much that they'll do almost anything [on behalf of the movement], whether or not they get any money. I don't teach by saying, "You have to love your region like this or this." We just walk together. We walk, and when they complain about being hungry or the forest being thick, I just tell them there are no demons in the forest and there is also no *bemo*. So I walk and that is how they too become ready and willing to walk on foot, from village to village. That is how they come to love their region.

August 17, 2002

I learned stuff and keep learning stuff from friends and experiences in North Mollo, but so do others. When they are able to talk or write about what they learned, then I learn some more from what they learned. That's how we rotate around a circle of meaning, swaying back and forth, discovering, revising, re-inscribing, rehearsing, recognizing, giving, and taking in the way of *meto* learning, farming, and ethics. It is a *meto* way, one way, of learning resistance.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY TIMELINE OF ANJAF-NAUSUSU MARBLE MINING CASE

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF ANJAF-NAUSUSU MARBLE MINING CASE[302]

Bupati = Regent, head of government administrative division one step below province
Camat = Sub-regent, head of government administrative division one step below regency

1995:

16 Jan. NTT Governor Herman Musakabe calls on NTT Mining Dept. to speed up process for issuing permits to mining companies. (*Pos Kupang*)

1997:

15 May Mining Permit No. 105/SKEP/HK/1997 (for Oenbit Village, Insana sub-regency, TTU) and Permit No. 103/SKEP/HK/1997 (T'eba Village, S. Biboki sub-regency, TTU) issued to **PT. Timor Marmer Industri** (mentioned in permit revocation documents, 4 May 1999).

19 Nov. TTS *Bupati* Piet Sabuna calls on the people of North Mollo to fully support marble mining. PT Marmer Industri said to be operating in Fatumnasi (at the foot of Mt. Mutis) and PT Gramer Industri Utama is said to be in FatuNausuu. (*Pos Kupang*)

5 Dec. TTS *Bupati* reports on findings of **PT. Indah Marmer Industri** survey, carried out during Nov., that indicate there is enough high-grade marble in TTS to produce for about 200 years. (*Nusa Tenggara*)

12 Dec. Letter from TTS *Bupati*'s Assistant, W. H. Nope, informs North Mollo *Camat* and *Camat*'s assistants that **PT. Timor Marmer Industri** has been mapping and measuring land at pre-determined mining locations since 24 Nov. 1997. (*Nusa Tenggara*)

17 Dec. NTT Gov. issues permit (No. 368/SKEP/HK/1997 to **PT. Soe Indah Marmer Indonesia** to mine at Naususu (mentioned in permit revocation document, 4 May 1999).

1998:

14 Jan. Mining Dept. Head, B. Ndoenboey, mentions plans to open a marble factory in Bolok (industrial area of Kupang), but problems related to status of land are currently an obstacle to realization of this plan. (*Surya Timor*)

26 Jan. Governor Musakabe announces that **PT. Timor Marmer Industri** is building facilities at Naususuu so that the first 3000 blocks of marble quarried can be exported to Taiwan and Singapore by June 1998. (*Pos Kupang*)

7 Feb. Environmental Research Center at Undana (NTT branch of national university) in conjunction with TTS Mining Dept. present findings from field research that indicate there are 640,968,000 cubic meters of marble deposits in TTS. (*Pos Kupang*)

---

[302] Entries marked with an asterisk (*) indicate primary data.

? Feb. Govt. leaders and security personnel (*Bupati*, NTT Industry Dept. rep., TTS Chief of Police, Mollo Chief of Police, Forestry Dept. rep. and military village personnel) meet with people to request they hand over land and Anjaf-Naususu to the govt. for marble mining, but people refuse. (PT. chronology)

(6-11 Mar. from TK's notes)

5 Mar. Tribal elders receive a letter of invitation to meet the *Bupati* at the mining site.

6 Mar. Meeting at the site with the N. Mollo *Camat*, **PT. Timor Marmer** Director, Hendrik Musakabe (Governor's son), Speaker of TTS People's Assembly, and District Military Commander. The Gov. and *Bupati* are not present. Hendrik sites export targets of 3000 marble blocks for 1998, 6000 for 1999, and 20,000 for 2000; 2001 before the industry will be able to involve local residents (also in *Pos Kupang*).

10 Mar. Tribal elders from 20 villages in N. Mollo draft letter of rejection re. mining addressed to Speaker of TTS People's Assembly.

11 Mar. TTS *Bupati* meets with tribal leaders from 12 villages at Naususu. He says that the rock is being managed for the well-being of the people. The elders request an explanation re. use of rocks mined.

12 Mar. 41 tribal elders send their statement of rejection to TTS *Bupati* with carbon copies to NTT Gov., Speaker of the NTT People's Assembly, Moderator of GMIT (largest Protestant church in NTT) and others. (PT. chronology)

? Mar. Meeting of people with NTT Gov., *Bupati*, TTS Chief of Police and others as follow-up to Feb. meeting (only this time the Gov. is present). Again the people are asked to hand over Anjaf-Naususu. This time the people are willing to surrender smaller rocks for mining, but not Anjaf-Naususu. (PT. chronology)

? Mar. Yet another meeting between people and TTS *Bupati* and other govt. officials to follow-up on discussion regarding the surrender of small rocks. According to the government's understanding the small rock referred to is Anjaf. (PT. chronology)

? Mar. **PT. Soe Indah Marmer/PT. Timor Marmer Industri** begin their activities (opening a road, building of base camps, bringing in equipment) although there has not yet been agreement or permission granted by local leadership or the people. (PT. chronology)

21 Mar. At invitation of local people, members of the press go to the mining site to see for themselves that historical relics have disappeared and what damage has been done to Anjaf-Naususu (41 blocks of marble have been exported to Taiwan). (PA's notes)

26-28 Mar. GMIT N. Mollo Presbytery meeting passes a decision, based on its Commission IV meeting, to reject marble exploration and exploitation in N. Mollo for environmental reasons such as pollution, erosion, etc. which would endanger health of the people in the area. (PT. chronology)

6 Apr. Anjaf is ceremonially handed over to TTS govt. by 9 children of the former Oematan King, also on behalf of 8 *amaf* and *feotnai* in N. Mollo. In attendance at the ceremony are the TTS *Bupati*, reps. from Forestry, Industry and Regional Development Departments, police and military personnel, village heads from several N. Mollo villages and some villagers. (PT. chronology)

25 Apr. NTT Mining Dept. spokesperson announces plan for President Suharto to preside at upcoming June ceremony for export of first marble blocks. The number to be exported won't be known until May as **PT. Soe Indah Marmer** is still mining at Naususu. (*Pos Kupang*)

21 May Suharto announces his resignation.

5 Aug. Elders meet to prepare a letter to TTS People's Assembly, the NTT People's Assembly, and National Parliament rejecting the mining. (PA's notes)

7 Aug. *Hundreds of farmers from Netpala and Lelobatan participate in PIAR-supported demonstration at Naususu. **PT. Timor Marmer Industri** miners begin to evacuate equipment at this time and do not return (also in TK's notes & verbal info. from LO, a demonstration participant).

10 Aug. Reps. from two villages go to TTS *Bupati* with written statement addressed to Speaker of TTS People's Assembly signed by tribal leaders from villages around Naususu that accuses mining co. and govt. of breaking contract on two accounts: Naususu rather than Anjaf is being mined and promises for new roads, schools, clinics, and churches have not been fullfilled. Their demands:

1) Mining co. must vacate Anjaf-Naususu premises within 1 week
2) Mining co. and TTS govt. must rehabilitate damage done
3) Mining co. must compensate for the 41+ marble blocks already taken
4) TTS govt. must halt all mining activities and plans throughout TTS

(also in TK's notes)

1999:

15-22 Mar. First Indigenous Peoples Congress in Jakarta is attended by Tius (male head of household where I stay during my field research) as participant and me as an observer.

26 Apr. * Formal introduction of my research to village leaders; Tius reports on the Congress and voices concern about the mining of Nausususu. A call is made for a follow-up meeting to further discuss the latter.

4 May NTT Gov. Tallo revokes mining permit for 14 mining companies, including **PT. Timor Marmer Industri** (via letters No. 61/SKEP/KH/1999 and No. 66/SKEP/KH/1999; see 15 May 1997 above) and **PT. Soe Indah Marmer** (via letter No. 57/SKEP/KH/1999; see 17 Dec. 1997 above), because they have given no indication they are serious about mining (permit revocation documents, *Pos Kupang*). See also 27 July 1999 and 13 Nov. 1999 below.

9 May	* Attend church in Fatukoto followed by meeting with local elders and community leaders to discuss ways to stop the mining; 48 blocks of marble were taken last year; ZB talks about history re. Naususu, but wants to go to the rock itself to recite full oral history.
20 May	* 12 land cruisers seen at Naususu for a ceremony with investor, TTS *Bupati*, N. Mollo *Camat*, other govt. officials and community leaders; ZB leads *natoni* (antiphonal, ritual speech of welcome)
21 May	Statement of agreement signed by Ben Oematan and CT (representing indigenous leaders) and Speaker of the TTS People's Assembly and TTS *Bupati* (as informed of the agreement) handing over Fatu Gong, Anjaf, and Nuat Ni Toto to JS, Director of **PT. Karya Asta Alam** (KAA) (Appendix D)
22 May	*In dialogue following installation of Lelobatan Village Head, Th. O. by N. Mollo *Camat*; rep. from Mining Dept. says, "*Kalau bapak-bapak menolak, itu urusan bapak, kami hanya ke sini untuk menjelaskan hal-hal teknis...*" [If you men reject the Naususu mining that's your affair. I'm just here to explain technical matters related to it.]
31 May	TTS *Bupati* issues letter of recommendation (No. Ek145.2/589/2/1999) to permit mining in TTS.
25 June	*Rumor circulating that 100 houses must be moved because miners are planning to blast the peak.
29 June	*During lunch at home of Th.O. (Lelobatan Village Head), topic of Naususu mining comes up and the Village Head starts quoting from the New Testament: "and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy."
1 July	NTT Gov. grants permission in principle for **PT. Karya Asta Alam** to mine in TTS (reporter's notes & *Pos Kupang*).
5 July	Government issues recommendation for mining marble at Naususu (reporter's notes).
7 July	*JCN, Tius, and several other other elders go to a hilltop close to Naususu for a ritual asking that those who had released Anjaf-Naususu for mining either repent or be punished
12 July	*Men from Oelnono (just across road from Naususu) come looking for Tius because they are so upset about the mining. They had met in their own village for three days in a row: "How can we just let someone into our territory, make a huge racket right at our front door and we just sit still?"
15 July-5 Aug.	An NGO-initiated campaign results in a number of protest letters to the NTT governor, government officials, and **PT. Karya Asta Alam** demanding that the mining of Naususu be stopped. Among groups who send letters during these weeks are JAGAT (Network for NTT Indigenous Peoples Movement) whose press release gets coverage in a local paper, national office and Bengkulu, Sumatra branch office of WALHI (Indonesian Environment Forum), E. Kalimantan Coordinator

	of JATAM (Indonesian Mining Advocacy Network), international office of Friends of the Earth, a consortium of Jakarta-based NGOs.
16 July	*A group of elders from Fatukoto visit Tius to get information about the planned visit by UKAW professors to their village; LO with advice from AA and others produces satisfactory sketch map of Naususu cluster
17 July	*NGO activists from Kupang and Kefa show up at T & M's expecting a demonstration by farmers early next week. They have planned an action at the *Bupati*'s office in Soe and have invited reporters to attend.
18 July	*The UNDANA (state university in Kupang) team that is to carry out the environmental impact study on the mining was seen going to the Lelobatan Village Chief's office.
20 July	*Group of UKAW professors visit Fatukoto to meet with local leaders to discuss the mining and its impact. Only six men show; word was spread that the meeting was not going to happen. While the UKAW group is eating lunch, the UNDANA team shows up. Debate, sometimes heated, about impact of the mining ensues.
24 July	*Rumors abound regarding potential threats to those opposing the mining. Rumors include identification of Campbell-Nelsons as major supporters of the anti-mining movement.
27 July	Newspaper article says 14 of 16 mining companies have had their permits revoked for failing to meet pre-requisites. The same article names **PT. Karya Asta Alam** as a new company from the Citatah Group currently operating at Naususu. (*Pos Kupang*)
4 Aug.	*Gathering of men from Lelobatan, Nefokoko, and Bes'ana. Oral history recited and Ben is cursed for handing over sacred rocks to miners.
7 Aug.	Participants from NTT Indigenous Peoples meeting demonstrate at Governor's office to demand that Industrial Forest Plantations and mining permits be revoked. (*Surya Timor*)
18-19 Aug.	WO and Enos (N. Mollo indigenous peoples' representatives) lobby cabinet ministers and others in Jakarta to stop the mining of Naususu. Their trip is sponsored by PIKUL, an NGO based in NTT.
19 Aug.	*Robert from NGO in Kupang shows up at Tius's with a letter of rejection to be signed by tribal leaders from several villages.
20 Aug.	As result of WO & Enos lobbying, Minister of Forestry and Plantations writes to the NTT Gov. (No. 1132/Menhutbun-VI/1999) pointing out that the Naususu mining has not yet received agreement from the forestry department and asks the Governor to consider stopping the mining. *L & L have news from market day in Kapan yesterday – trucks, covered with tarp, have begun to transport marble.
20-22 Aug.	*A group of 8 men and 1 woman travel to Bikau Niki for first time to seek help from Sonbai (great Timorese king).
21 Aug.	*Mining sounds from Naususu have stopped.
24 Aug.	*To Tun Bes brings news that he was approached by GO to join the pro-mining group. Man from Fatukoto brings news that a judge and

	public prosecutor showed up at Naususu to find out if the miners had a valid permit. Elders to meet at the former king's residence in Ajaobaki tomorrow to prepare for meeting with the governor the day after tomorrow. Markus, Tius, and I go to pray at Erwin's tree and also in Maria's kitchen so that the meeting of the elders with the governor will not succeed in resumption of mining activities.
26-28 Aug.	*Second trip by foot and horseback (about 30 km. over rugged terrain) to visit Sonbai in Bikau Niki preceded by ritual prayer led by Grandpa Sarus. Trip unsuccessful because group failed to meet one of the prerequisites set by Sonbai, namely offering of a reddish-brown pig.
26 Aug.	*Further discussions regarding circulation of letter to reject mining.
28 Aug.	15 tribal elders meet NTT Gov. Tallo in Kupang and complain about WO and Enos's anti-mining visit to Jakarta, saying it had been engineered. (*Pos Kupang*)
29 Aug.	*Loud tape playing at Naususu – a party?
30 Aug.	Further to WO & Enos's lobbying efforts in Jakarta (18-19 Ag.), the Indonesian State Dept. sends a letter to the NTT Gov. and the TTS *Bupati* (No.340/1992/V/Bangda) requesting they immediately report the chronology of the marble mining problem. (*Hantam Pi*)
31 Aug.	Further to WO & Enos's lobbying efforts in Jakarta (18-19 Ag.), National HR Commission writes to NTT Gov. (No. 2.083/SKPMT/VIII/99) requesting clarification of the issue and requesting that it be resolved justly and democratically. (*Hantam Pi*)
	*Mining sounds at Naususu resume in earnest. Ritual prayer and chicken sacrifice at *Pa'Non Tanen* to curse mining. FO, Ben's older brother, shows up to solicit Tius's help in trying to mediate a family dispute. He says miners now work 2 shifts and late into the night. He is suspected of spying. Enos shows up at Tius and Maria's to share about his trip to Jakarta (emotional to point of tears when directing his anger at FO); resistance plan takes shape after FO leaves.
1 Sept.	*Men's group leaves before daybreak for third trip to Sonbai. Report from wife of one of the men who met with the governor; wants "bad money" (from husband's mining work) prayed over. WO shows up to find out who is opposed to the mining as this has bearing on which Oematan family members are eligible for shares in the mining co.
2 Sept.	*Enos is beaten for opposing mining of Nua Mollo (*NTT Ekspres*). JAGAT briefing paper and call for emergency action only just now distributed to press (*Surya Timor*).
3 Sept.	*Government's opening ceremony at Naususu signals its official approval of the mining (*Pos Kupang*).
7 Sept.	Leave for traditional ceremony in Tamkesi, but get only as far as Soe. Roads crowded with refugees from East Timor. I return to my home in Noelbaki.
8 Okt.	Since 3 Sept., **PT. KAA** has mined 93 blocks of marble with a total weight of 1,000 tons (*Pos Kupang*).

4 Nov.	National HR Commission issues a second letter (No. 2.283 A/ SKPMT/ IX/ 99) expressing concern about mining of marble rocks in the Mollo tribal region, Lelobatan, Ajaobaki, and Tunua Villages (mentioned in Persekutuan Masyarakat Adat Mollo letter, 3 Feb. 2000).
6 Nov.	*I return to the field (Heum). Sound of chain saws at Naususu as loud as ever.
9 Nov.	*Some of workers at Naususu said to be E. Timorese; salaries said to be lower; many injuries reported.
10 Nov.	A special People's Assembly team discovers that permission to use (borrow!) the forest around Naususu has never been issued (rumor that NTT Forestry Dept. will seek postponement of mining at Naususu), and also that up to now retribution for marble mining has not yet been paid. (*Surya Timor*)
13 Nov.	Six marble companies, including **PT. Timor Marmer Industri**, threaten to contest the revoking of their permits, but their plan to bring the NTT Governor to court was postponed when an out-of-court settlement was reached (*Pos Kupang*).

2000:

(*unless marked otherwise, following information comes from reports by Ana*)

7 Jan.	*The pastor at Fatukoto church rumored to have accepted 1 million rupiah and 1 ton of rice from the mining company.
30 Jan.	Meeting of govt. employees in Soe from N. Mollo concerned about the mining of Naususu with some local NGO activists. Decision is made to prepare a letter of protest to be signed by villagers.
3 Feb.	Follow-up to 30 Jan. meeting is held to discuss draft of the protest letter.
5 Feb.	Visit to mining site by Soe activists to assess damage to date.
7 Feb.-19 Mar.	Ana, Mollo activist based in Soe, approaches key traditional leaders – *amaf*, *feotnai*, *naimnuke*, and *meo* (see Appendix C, Changes in Leadership Structure in TTS) – to revitalize traditional customs and build anti-mining alliance. Formation of *lulbas* (local couriers) plays an essential component in this organizing effort.
14 Feb.	Fellowship of Mollo Indigenous Peoples send letter rejecting marble mining to government leaders at the provincial and regency levels.
21 Mar.-22 Apr.	Series of secret meetings with *amaf* and others to realize two matters: 1) Get rid of companies that come in and ruin the environment. 2) Restore our traditional structure that has become extinct. Formation of *lulbas* (messenger) network
26 Apr.	*Lulbas* & Ana meet to hear *lulbas* findings from 10 villages re. presence & activities of mining companies, social-environmental impact to date, and numbers opposed to mining.
16 May	Traditional ceremony and prayer at *Fatu Tunan* to determine cause of exceptionally long rainy season. Those attending are convinced it is because of the mining and Naususu and strengthens their resolve to protest.

31 May-23 June	Activists hold meetings in 12 villages where villagers are given an opportunity to express their anger about the mining and prepare themselves for sit-in at Naususu.
19-20 June	*Lulbas* (communication network members) meet and form a small team to handle logistics of sit-in. The women feel increasingly strong and prepared to invite other women to join the sit-in.
27-30 June	Final plans and division of labor related to sit-in. Food and money contributions are collected and counted.
2 July	*Lulbas* gather to prepare posters. In the middle of the night they go with trucks to pick up protestors from different villages.
3 July	About 600 people opposed to mining stage **first sit-in at Naususu**, post banners, orations given; when regency government officials show up later in the day there is heated exchange.
4 July	Delegation of those opposed to the mining go to the *Bupati*'s office in Soe to voice their protest. A delegation of mining supporters is also present to counter the protestors' complaints.
5 July	TTS government officials, members of TTS people's assembly, and security personnel return to mining site to threaten protestors. Some say they are communists engaged in anarchy and traitors to development and will be arrested by the army and thrown in jail.
6 July	A number of protestors finally leave the site when threatened by armed security personnel (army and police).
10 July	About 2000 protestors **return to stage a sit-in at Naususu**. Several doors of mining building are damaged and miners evacuate to Soe. About 14 protestors (local farmers and activists) are arrested and taken to the *Camat*'s office in Kapan. Head of **PT. KAA** sends a letter (No. 002/KAA-CTT/VII/00) to TTS *Bupati* asking he take care of the problem with the protestors (also reporter's notes).
11 July	Head of TTS Social Political Dept. goes to Kapan (*Camat*'s office) to try to resolve the conflict but to no avail as tribal leaders and NGO activists don't attend (reporter's notes).
13 July	More than 3000 villagers from different regions of West Timor, including N. Mollo, **protest at the Governor's office in Kupang**, demanding an ending to the mining. Governor requests one month and promises to withdraw mining company's permit by 13 August.
17 July	Local leaders meet to plan next step.
18 July	Pro-mining supporters remove protest banners and signs placed at Naususu by demonstrators to hand them over to TTS *Bupati* (reporter's notes).
21 July	Local leaders meet with members of NTT and TTS People's Assemblies who have just learned of the Governor's promise to withdraw **PT. KAA's** mining permit.
24 July	TNI visits Lelobatan to pressure protestors to change their minds. Those opposed to the mining are asked if they are willing to reimburse losses to the investor.

27 July — *Bupati*, *Camat*, and members of the TTS leadership council meet with traditional leaders at Fonha'e, the field close to Naususu, once used for horse racing but also a site for resolving conflicts. Fobia as mediator says the purpose of the meeting is to bring together two opposing parties to resolve their conflict.

2 Aug. — Two mediators of "reconciliation" process go to Lelobatan Village Head and a number of the *amaf* with money to say the meeting with the *Bupati* has been postponed. All but one of the *amaf* accept the money.

5 Aug. — Local leaders meet at Fonha'e to assess intimidation by regency government towards the people.

8 Aug. — *Amaf* are suddenly picked up and escorted to Soe for a meeting with the *Bupati*. They are offered 10 million *rupiah* each for Naususu. They reject the offer.

10 Aug. — Protestors return to the mining site for a **third sit-in** with the intention of burning the mining company buildings. They are concerned to see no signs of departure by the mining company.

12 Aug. — *Amaf* tell the miners they must leave the premises by 14 August or suffer the consequences.

15 Aug. — *Bupati* and leadership council again hold a meeting at mining site to bring together the two opposing parties. Demonstrators arm themselves with sticks and rocks as they yell to close the mining. Government reps. (*Bupati*, etc.) say rejecting the mining is equivalent to a desire to see the governor lose his seat of power. They stress that this is a development project for the people, etc. *Bupati* is roughed up by demonstrators and flees the site. All remaining mining personnel and equipment withdraw as well.

18 Aug. — Governor signs a letter that halts mining of Anjaf-Naususu for six months, from 1 Sept. 2000 – 1 Mar. 2001 (*Surya Timor*).

21 Aug. — In a press conference, Gov. Tallo said he would close down the marble mining if the people could come up with an alternative for supporting regional sources of income. He also rejects suggestions he be involved as a mediator in the problem saying it should be handled entirely by the regency government. He warns people not to seek information from the wrong source. He says he received a letter a week earlier from Sony Keraf, Environment Minister, regarding the marble mining. He says the contents of the letter were very mistaken because Keraf received information from a source that didn't know the real problem. (*Surya Timor*)

25 Nov. — Head of the NTT Mining Dept., Benny Ndoenboey, said that a halt to marble mining will cause a loss of 400 million *rupiah* a year from local sources of income as well as the loss of employment. (*Pos Kupang*)

2001:

28 Juli — *Bupati* Nope says he plans to resume marble mining in N. Mollo by bringing in an investor from Jakarta. **PT. Karya Asta Alam** is prepared to return as long as security of their personnel is guaranteed. (*Pos Kupang, Radar Timor*)

18 Aug. NTT Mining Dept. Head, Ndoenboey, says the only new mining company interested in investing in NTT is from Singapore who is interested in mining kaolin and gypsum (*NTT Ekspres*).

21 Aug. Member of TTS administration says plans are under way to revise mining regulations. A team of legislators plan to undertake a comparative study with **Citatah** in E. Java [mining group with former interests in Naususu – see 27 July 1999 above!] (*Radar Timor*)

APPENDIX C

PRAYER AT THROAT OF THE EARTH (*PAÉ NON TANIN*)
August 31, 1999

The following prayer was delivered by Markus Kune, Tius's older brother and a local evangelist at a Protestant congregation in another village in North Mollo.[303]

> Let us pray to God, to request a direct answer from God to all of us. Let us pray. O God, You who possess the kingdom and the glory, we come to this place of our ancestors, this place of secure forest, secure land, secure rocks because of your justice, [secure] because there are guides to mark our steps, [that tell us] what we may touch and what we may not touch. All of this is to your glory.
>
> O God, we must protect each spot, every corner of nature, especially in the territory of North Mollo where, since the kings from generation to generation, the land has been protected, the forest has been protected, the rocks have been protected so that they are not ruined by anyone. Thus we come before You now, God, You in Heaven, but we hear noises at Nanjaf and Naususuu rocks that have been greatly damaged. This makes the hearts of your followers uneasy because this is your creation, O Lord, that you made as a place that reveals Your glory, in that place are also placed springs of water, in that place is also placed forest to green your creation. God, in that place is a rock beautiful in appearance, as if God Almighty is being glorified from the water and from the earth. You have also created the wind that blows here and there as if it were revealing the glory of God, praising God with each gust of wind, the leaves are scattered everywhere as if they were singing praises to you. God, lustrous rocks that shine all about also give glory and praise to You.
>
> But in this place, at this very moment, the land of Mollo, especially Nanjaf and Naususuu rocks, is being destroyed. O God, listen to the noises now that are there; hear them. Although it is said that You are far too high and far off, [we still believe] You will hear in the middle of the earth. When You hear the sighs of your followers, You will answer them because we sigh for the rock that has been of glory to you, where waters gush forth everywhere. But the sounds there now are the sounds of earthly desire; the rock has been ruined because of the attitudes and deeds of people, O God of creation. Do they have a different god? You will answer because their breath belongs to you and their attitude towards life doesn't uphold Your truth.

---

[303] Although Markus delivered the prayer in Indonesian, presumably for my benefit, he replicated the style of traditional Timorese recitations in terms of rhythm and accent.

God, You who are so glorious, answer us through your own means, through the ways you have to respond to our brothers whom you have created, not to destroy nature, but to nurture it. For You have already given us our place that we must embrace. The rock that has been planted on the face of the earth, whose peak rises up as a sign of Your glory has been damaged, this place that in truth gathers together each stream and spring, and the forest too is already damaged. You hear the sound of the wood [being cut], the sound of the rock [being drilled], the land bears witness to a government that in this era tends to be characterized as one who destroys. Use Your ways, O God, to do something because in the past they [the government] issued prohibitions to make [this area] safe [from destruction]. Now they tread upon those decisions.

O God, answer from on high down to the lowest level, because they have become sponsors of those who destroy your creation; they walk over all regulations, tread on previous decisions, policies, and prohibitions they themselves made; they have trespassed the laws of God. It is very evident that they oppose God in heaven, greatly oppose God's will. As humans, we are very nervous about this destruction, but we are unable to respond to them. God, you can stop the investor, the workers, those who are their sponsors, destroyers of nature. Rather than legitimate this destruction, O God, respond with the might of Your Hand. Be present in their midst so that by the harshness of Your Hand they will [come to] understand life, will also understand the land, springs of water and the forest they have destroyed.

We cry out to you from this place, O God, because since the beginning, whenever the earth was threatened, our ancestors came to this place to make all their prohibitions. They upheld justice for Your creation, God, that is a truth they upheld from the beginning. At this moment we do not want to worship a different god, but in this place, from which they secured the forest and all nature, in this place we cry out for You to respond with the power of Your Hand in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, You of earth and heaven, You Who possess the forest and land, Who possess water and dry land. Almighty God, we come before you with great moans because of what is happening now. We are convinced You will answer and forgive those among us who may have been influenced to become a destroyer. God, respond to them also by other means...We come before you with our cries only in the name of Jesus who is the power for human life.

To those who are faithful to You, O Lord, You will continue to give breath. To those who are not loyal and faithful, You will take your portion so that they live as insignificant creatures, live as humans without meaning, because that is your Will, Father, because that is your Power, Father, because that is your Hand, Father. We come crying to you, Father, this evening, with Christ who is Head of the Church. We come and pray to you, Father in Heaven. **Amin.**

APPENDIX D

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN TTS
(security forces not shown but for *meo*)

APPENDIX E[304]

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

TODAY, FRIDAY, TWENTY-ONE MAY ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE, IN SOE, WE THE UNDERSIGNED:

1. NAME : JS

   POSITION : CHIEF DIRECTOR, PT. KARYA ASTA ALAM

   ADDRESS : AMABI ST. 54, KUPANG

IN THIS MATTER ACTS FOR AND IN THE NAME OF THE ABOVE SAID COMPANY AND WILL HEREAFTER BE CALLED THE FIRST PARTY

2. a. NAME : Drs. CT

   POSITION : NORTH MOLLO SOCIAL LEADER

   ADDRESS : GAJAH MADA ST., SOE – TTS

   b. NAME : BO

   POSITION : NORTH MOLLO SOCIAL LEADER

   ADDRESS : KAPAN – AJAOBAKI – N. MOLLO SUB-REGENCY

IN THIS MATTER ACTS FOR AND IN THE NAME OF THE OEMATAN FAMILY REFERRED TO AS THE SECOND PARTY.

HEREIN IS EXPLAINED THAT THE FIRST PARTY AND THE SECOND PARTY HEREBY AGREE AND EACH AGREE WITH THE AGREEMENT MADE BY THE TWO SIDES:

THE FIRST PARTY IS WILLING TO GIVE HELP TO THE SECOND PARTY IN THE FORM OF:

a. REBUILD I (ONE) ADAT HOUSE (PALACE) IN AJAOBAKI.
b. BUILD ONE HOUSE OF WORSHIP APPROPRIATE TO THE WORSHIPERS' INTERESTS.
c. GIVE SCHOLARSHIPS TO THOSE IN THE OEMATAN FAMILY WHO SHOW POTENTIAL.

---

[304] Except for the footnotes, this translation from Indonesian retains the format of the original, including all text as capital letters.

d. ACCEPT WORKERS FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN ACCORD WITH THEIR LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE COMPANY.
e. OTHER AID THAT WILL BE ESPECIALLY DISCUSSED BY THE TWO SIDES.

WHEREAS THE SECOND PARTY IS WILLING TO ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF THE FIRST SIDE BY GIVING:

a. GIVING LAND AT GONG ROCK, ANJAF ROCK, AND NUAT NI TOTO TO BE MADE INTO A MARBLE MINING PROJECT.
b. SUPERVISE AND HELP IN SECURING RELEASE OF THE LAND AS A MARBLE MINING AREA.
c. GUARANTEE SECURITY AND ORDER FOR THE DURATION OF THE BUILDING PROCESS AND THE MINING EFFORT.
d. WILLING TO ACCEPT DECISIONS ABOUT THE VALUE OF COMPENSATION BOTH FOR PLANTS AS WELL AS BUILDINGS IN THE MINING AREAS IN ACCORD WITH DECISIONS MADE.
e. WILLING TO NOT DEMAND A STOP TO MINING ACTIVITY SHOULD THERE BE A DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES FOR THE DURATION OF THE MINING PERMIT.
f. WILLING TO SETTLE ANY PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT ARISE DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINING BY MEANS OF JOINT DISCUSSION AND CONSENSUS.
g. WILL NOT DO ANYTHING DISTURBING THAT WOULD RESULT IN A WORK STRIKE.

OTHER:

1. THE FIRST PARTY WILL SPELL OUT MATTERS REGARDING SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS AGREEMENT IN SEPARATE REGULATIONS.
2. RECLAIM DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AS A RESULT OF PAST EXPLOITATION.
3. EVERY ATTITUDE AND POLICY TAKEN BY PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE OEMATAN NAI NI TO FAMILY FROM THE AJAOBAKI PALACE ARE REALIZED TO BE ILLEGITIMATE.
4. OTHER MATTERS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE HANDLED BY JOINT DISCUSSION FOR CONSENSUS.
5. THIS AGREEMENT HAS BEEN WITNESSED BY THE BUPATI, HEAD OF THE TTS LEVEL II REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION, HEAD OF THE TTS LEVEL II PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY, MEMBERS OF THE TTS LEVEL II LEADERHIP COUNCIL, HEAD OF THE NTT LEVEL I PROVINCIAL MINING DEPARTMENT, HEADS OF OTHER TTS LEVEL II DEPARTMENTS, ADAT LEADERS OF THE OEMATAN FAMILY AND DIRECTOR OF PT. KARYA HASTA [sic] ALAM.

6. THIS AGREEMENT TAKES EFFECT AT THE TIME IT IS SIGNED.

THUS THIS LETTER OF AGREEMENT IS MADE AND SIGNED BY THE TWO PARTIES.

THE FIRST PARTY	THE SECOND PARTY
1. Drs. CT[305]	
2. BO[306].....	JS

WITNESSING :

HEAD OF LEVEL II PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, SOUTH CENTRAL TIMOR	BUPATI, HEAD OF LEVEL II REGION, SOUTH CENTRAL TIMOR
Drs. M. ASBANU	WILLEM NOPE, SH

[305] A former *bupati* of TTS.

[306] Illegitimate son of former, well-loved king Sam Oematan, Ben was officially installed as the new king of TTS in a poorly attended ceremony that the government engineered in order to try and give some *adat* legitimacy to their front man.

APPENDIX F

O HE (ONE VERSE)

1. *Au o ho he le, le ho he le mak nai o*
   A eon bi he nai ma e hao
   Ai o ho he le ho he
2. *Oet bi suan na lalul uis paha*

   E mutua paha meke lo sah ai o
1. *Utua ekja tunis ma ai fual*
   Ai o ho he le ho he
2. *E tuin sai baun ma mak bai o hao*
   E le lo tatua ema tuin sai baun nema e Hao
1. *Au o ho he le, le ho he le mak nai o*
   Ai eon bi he nai ma e hao
   Au o ho he le ho he
2. *A oet bi suan na ma lalul uis paha*

   Ai o ho he le ho he
1. *Tuin sai baun nemak bai o hao*
   E le lo tatua ema tuin sam sai baun ma ehe hao

1. Just come on, try to say it now, o
   Get straight, come on, let's begin
   Haleluya [to the earth, to the seeds]
2. We've cut the digging stick and we're pointing it towards the earth
   E, What should we put in the earth?
1. Just fill it with peas and beans
   Haleluya [to the earth, to the seeds]
2. I'm talking about the pea
   E, ya just fill it with the pea

1. Just come on, try to say it now, o
   Get straight, come on, let's begin
   Haleluya [to the earth, to the seeds]
2. We've cut the digging stick and we're pointing it towards the earth
   Haleluya [to the earth, to the seeds]
1. The pea has already been mentioned
   Ya, now we plant the pea.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

58 Rektor PTN kutuk jual beli gelar [Rectors of 58 schools of higher education curse selling and buying of degrees]. (2002, April 19). *Pos Kupang*.

Abu-Lughod, L. (1990). The romance of resistance: Tracing transformations of power through Bedouin women. *American Ethnologist 17* (1), 41-55.

Adas, M. (1992). From avoidance to confrontation: Peasant protest in precolonial and colonial Southeast Asia. In N. B. Dirks (Ed.), *Colonialism and culture*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Aditjondro, G. J. (2000). *Menyongsong matahari terbit di puncak Ramelau: Dampak pendudukan Timor Lorosa'e dan munculnya gerakan pro-Timor Lorosa'e di Indonesia* [Commemorating the sunrise on Ramelau peak: Impact of the occupation of Timor Lorosa'e and the emergence of a pro-Timor Lorosa'e movement in Indonesia]. Jakarta: Yayasan Hak dan Fortilos.

_____ (1998). *Is oil thicker than blood? A study of oil companies' interests and Western complicity in Indonesia's annexation of East Timor. Unpublished manuscript, Newcastle, Australia.*

Agrawal, A. & commentators (1998). Indigenous and scientific knowledge: Some critical comments. *Antropologi Indonesia, 55*, 14-43.

Akbar bisa pimpin DPR dari penjara [Akbar can lead Assembly from prison]. (2002, September 9). *Pos Kupang*.

Alcoff, L. (1994). Cultural feminism versus post-structuralism: The identity crisis in feminist theory. In N. Dirks, G. Eley, & S. Ortner (Eds.), *Culture/power/history: A reader in contemporary social theory* (pp. 96-122). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Almet, E. (2000). *Sejarah Mata Jemaat Ebenhaezar Hoineno, Jilid I* [History of Ebenhaezar Hoineno Congregation, Volume I]. Unpublished manuscript, Lelobatan, Mollo Utara, TTS.

Arenas, A. (1998). Education and nationalism in East Timor. *Social Justice 25* (2), 131-148.

Bachriadi, D. (1998). *Merana di tengah kelimpahan: Pelanggaran-pelanggaran HAM pada industri pertambangan di Indonesia* [Long-suffering in the midst of plenty: Human rights abuses of the Indonesian mining industry]. Jakarta: ELSAM.

Bani, P. (1997). *Sejarah gereja Jemaat Wilayah Netpala* [Church history of the Netpala Regional Congregation]. Unpublished manuscript, Fatukoto, Mollo Utara, TTS.

Banuri, T. & Marglin, F. A. (1993). A systems-of-khnowledge analysis of deforestation, participation and management. In T. Banuri & F. A. Marglin (Eds.), *Who will save the forests? Knowledge, power and environmental destruction*. London: Zed Books.

Bar On, B. (1993). Marginality and epistemic privilege. In L. Alcoff & E. Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemologies* (pp. 83-100). New York: Routledge.

Baswir, R., Hudiyanto, Andriono, R., Aditya, M. Y., & Sambodo, D. P. (1999). *Pembangunan tanpa perasaan: Evaluasi pemenuhan hak ekonomi sosial dan budaya Orde Baru* [Development without feeling: An evaluation of the fulfillment of economic, social, and cultural rights during the New Order]. Jakarta: ELSAM & Yogyakarta: IDEA & Pustaka Pelajar.

Baun, A. (2001, February). *Laporan: Narasi persekutuan masyarakat adat Mollo Utara, 10 bulan* (Desember 1999 s/d bulan September 2000) [Report: Narration of the fellowship of masyarakat adat in North Mollo, 10 months (December 1999 – September 2000). Unpublished manuscript, Soe, TTS.

Baviskar, A. (2000). Claims to knowledge, claims to control: Environmental conflict in the Great Himalayan National Park, India. In R. Ellen, P. Parkes, & A. Bicker (Eds.), *Indigenous environmental knowledge and its transformations* (pp. 101-119). Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Benofinit, T. (1972). *Perincian sejarah pulau Timor dan pulau-pulaunya Gunung Mutis* [Detailed history of Timor island and the islands of Gunung Mutis]. Unpublished manuscript, Kapan, Mollo Utara, TTS.

Boxer, C. R. (1968). *Fidalgos in the far east*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brosius, J. P. (2000). Endangered forest, endangered people: Environmentalist representations of indigenous knowledge. In R. Ellen, P. Parkes, & A. Bicker (Eds.), *Indigenous environmental knowledge and its transformations* (pp. 293-313). Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Campbell-Nelson, J. (1998). *Indonesia in shadow and light*. New York: Friendship Press.

Campbell-Nelson, K., Damapolii, Y. A., Simanjuntak, L., Tadu Hungu, F. (2002). *Perempuan dibawa/h laki-laki yang kalah: Kekerasan terhadap perempuan Timor Timur dalam kamp pengungsian di Timor Barat* [Women carried by/underneath men who lost: Violence against East Timorese women in refugee camps in West Timor]. Kupang: JKPIT [Women's Health Network in Eastern Indonesia] and PIKUL [Foundation for Strengthening Local Institutions and Capacity].

Campbell-Nelson, K. (1998). *Political ecology in a post-Suharto era.* Unpublished comprehensive paper, Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Chatwin, B. (1987). *The songlines.* London: Picador.

Confusion and delay (2001, February). *Down to Earth, 48.* Retrieved on November 6, 2002 from http://dte.gn.apc.org/48c+d.htm

Coser, L. (1956). *The functions of social conflict.* New York: Free Press.

Cunningham, C. E. (1965). Order and change in an Atoni diarchy. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 21*, 359-381.

Deposit marmer di TTS 640.968.000 m3 [Marble deposits in TTS – 640,968,000 cubic meters]. (1998, February 7). *Pos Kupang.*

Diduga, DPRD TTS kolusi dengan Kadis Oematan [Suspected that TTS People's Assembly in collution with Bureau Head Oematan] (2001, October 4). *Radar Timor.*

Diduga, mafia KKN sedang gerogoti elite TTS [Suspected that corruption, collusion, and nepotism mafia are gnawing at TTS elite]. (2001, October 24). *Radar Timor.*

Diserbu di Timika, dua warga Amerika Serikat dan satu WNI tewas [Attacked in Timika, two US citizens and one Indonesian citizen killed]. (2002, September 2). *Radar Timor*, pp. 1, 11.

Effendi, T. N. (2000). *Pembangunan, krisis, & arah reformasi* [Development, crisis, and aims of reformation]. Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press.

ELSAM (1995). *Atas nama pembangunan: Bank Dunia dan hak asasi manusia di Indonesia* [On behalf of development: The World Bank and human rights in Indonesia]. Jakarta: Author.

Encarta® World English Dictionary [Computer software]. (1999). USA: Microsoft Corporation.

Erven, E. van (1992). *The playful revolution: Theatre and liberation in Asia.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Escobar, A. (1999, February). "After nature": Steps to an anti-essentialist political ecology. *Current Anthropology, 40*(1), 1-30.

Fakih, M. (1991). *NGOs in Indonesia: Issues in hegemony and social change.* Occasional Paper Series on Non Governmental Organizations, R. Bosch, H. Fox, S. Kane, &C. Meyers (Eds.). Amherst, MA: Center for International Education.

Fauzi, N. (1997a). Penghancuran populisme dan pembangunan kapitalisme: Dinamika politik agraria Indonesia pasca kolonial [The destruction of populism and the development of capitalism: The dynamics of post-colonial Indonesian agrarian politics]. In D. Bachriadi, E. Faryadi, & B. Setiawan (Eds.), *Reformasi agraria: Perubahan politik, sengketa, dan agenda pembaruan agraria di Indonesia* [Agrarian reform: Political change, disputes, and agenda for agrarian reform in Indonesia] (pp. 67-122). Jakarta: Publishing House of the Economics Faculty, University of Indonesia.

_____ (Ed.) (1997b). *Tanah dan pembangunan: Risalah dari Konferensi INFID ke-10* [Land and development: Proceedings of the 10th INFID Conference]. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan.

_____ (1995). Transformasi agraria dan kesejahteraan kaum tani [Agrarian transformation and the welfare of farmers]. In U. Hariadi & Masruchah (Eds.), *Tanah, rakyat dan demokrasi* [Land, people and democracy] (pp. 137-171). Yogyakarta: Forum LSM – LPSM DIY.

Feith, H. & Castles, L. (Eds.). (1970). *Indonesian political thinking 1945-1965.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Fiorenza, E. S. (1981). Toward a feminist biblical hermeneutics: Biblical interpretation and liberation theology. In B. Mahan & L. D. Richesin (Eds.), *The challenge of liberation theology: A first world response* (pp. 91-112). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Fobia, F. H. (2000). *Pah Mollo: Selayang pandang* [Mollo Land: A passing breeze, a view]. Unpublished manuscript.

Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness.* New York: The Seabury Press.

_____ (1968). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: The Seabury Press.

Freudenberger, C. D. (1986). *Food for tomorrow?* Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House.

Gedicks, A. (2001). *Resource rebels: Native challenges to mining and oil corporations.* Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Geertz, C. (1983). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In R. M. Emerson, *Contemporary field research: A collection of readings* (pp. 37-59). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Giroux, H. A. & McLaren, P. L. (1991). Radical pedagogy as cultural politics: Beyond the discourse of critique and anti-utopianism. In D. Morton & M. Zavarzadeh (Eds.), *Theory/pedagogy/poltics: Texts for change* (pp. 152-186). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Glassburner, B. (1971). Indoneisan economic policy after Sukarno. In B. Glassburner (Ed.), *The economy of Indonesia: Selected readings* (pp. 426-443). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Gordon, D. A. (1995). Border work: Feminist ethnography and the dissemination of literacy. In R. Behar & D. A. Gordon (Eds.), *Women writing culture*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Guna memaksimalkan muatan lokal: Pemotongan dana JPS pendidikan [To maximize local product: Cutting educational social safety net funds] (2000, April 10). *Sasando Pos*.

Gutierrez, G. (1973). *A theology of liberation: History, politics and salvation* (C. Inda & J. Eagleson, Trans., Eds.). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. (Original work published 1971)

Hammond, J. (1998). *Fighting to learn: Popular education and guerilla war in El Salvador*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Haraway, D. (1988, Fall). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies 14* (3), 575-599.

Harding, S. (1993). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is "strong objectivity"? In L. Alcoff & E. Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemologies* (pp. 49-82). New York: Routledge.

_____ (1991). *Whose science? Whose knowledge? Thinking from women's lives*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hari ini Epy Tahun kembali diperiksa kejaksaan [Today Epy Tahun is again examined in court] (2001, October 10). *Radar Timor*.

Heo, M. & Messakh, M. (2001). *Belajar membaca konunitas di Mollo, Timor Tengah Selatan* [Learning to read communities in Mollo, South Central Timor]. PIKUL: Unpublished manuscript, Kupang, NTT.

Hill, H. (2000). *The Indonesian economy* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hippler, J. (1995). Democratisation of the Third World after the end of the Cold War. In J. Hippler (Ed.), *The democratisation of disempowerment: The problem of democracy in the Third World* (pp. 1-31). East Haven, CT: Pluto Press.

Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom.* New York: Routledge.

_____ (1984). *Feminist theory: From margin to center.* Boston: South End Press.

Hornborg, A. (1996). Ecology as semiotics: Outlines of a contextualist paradigm for human ecology. In P. Descola & G. P<lsson (Eds.), *Nature and society: Anthropological perspectives.* New York: Routledge.

Iswandi (1998). *Bisnis militer Orde Baru: Keterlibatan ABRI dalam bidang ekonomi dan pengaruhnya terhadap pembentukan rezim otoriter* [New Order military's business: Armed forces involvement in the economic field and its influence on formation of an authoritarian regime]. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Juni ekspor marmer diresmikan [June marble export will be made official] (1998, January 26). *Pos Kupang.*

Juni, ekspor perdana marmer TTS [June, export of TTS marble inaugurated] (1998, March 16). *Pos Kupang.*

Kamat, S. (2002). *Development hegemony: NGOs and the state in India.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Kartika, S. & Gautama, C. (Eds.) (1999). *Menggugat posisi masyarakat adat terhadap negara* [Rocking the position of indigenous peoples vis-à-vis the state]. Proceedings from the Meeting of Indigenous Peoples of the Indonesian Archipelago, 15-16 March 1999. Jakarta: Kongres Masyarakat Adat Nusantara 1999 & LSPP.

Kekacauan Poso ingin menjatuhkan Megawati [Poso chaos wants to bring down Megawati]. (2002, August 16). *Pos Kupang.*

Kembalikan Rp. 1,5 M dan hentikan pemotongan DBO [Return 1,5 billion rupiah and stop the cutting of operational aid funds] (2000, April 10). *Pos Kupang.*

King, U. (1994). Introduction. In U. King (Ed.), *Feminist theology from the third world: A reader* (pp. 1-22). Maryknoll, NY: SPCK/Orbis Press.

Koenig, S. (2001). Human Rights Education for Social Transformation: Innovative Grassroots Programs on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [Electronic version]. Retrieved November 14, 2002 from http://pdhre.igc.org/dialogue/koenig01.html

Kontroversi renegosiasi kontrak karya PT Freeport Indonesia [Controversy regarding renegotiation of PT Freeport Indonesia's work contract]. (2001, Juli). *Gali-gali 2* (4). Retrieved November 5, 2002 from http://www.jatam.org/indonesia/newsletter/uploaded/gg4.html#fg

Kopassus dituding terlibat: Tewasnya 3 karyawan Freeport [Kopassus accused of involvement: Killing of 3 Freeport workers]. (2002, September 2). *Pos Kupang*, p. 10.

Koswara, E. (2000). Pengaruh format politik nasional terhadap demokrasi lokal (Suatu analisis kebijakan otonomi dan prospek demokrasi lokal menurut Undang-undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999) [The influence of a national political format towards local democracy (An analysis of autonomy policy and prospects for local democracy according to Law Number 22 Year 1999)]. In Dadang, J. (Ed.), *Arus bawah demokrasi: Otonomi dan pemberdayaan desa* [The undercurrent of democracy: Autonomy and village empowerment] (pp. 55-101). Yogyakarta: Lapera Pustaka Utama.

Kronenthal, M. & Taylor, B. (1995, December). Students' right to free speech stifled. *Environmental forum: A project of the Tulane Green Club 4* (3) as received via email on Jan. 21, 1996.

Lahajir (2001). *Etnoekologi perladangan orang Dayak Tunjung Linggang: Etnografi lingkungan hidup di dataran tinggi Tunjung* [Ethnoecology of Tunjung Linggang Dayak cultivation: An environmental ethnography in the Tunjung uplands]. Yogyakarta: Yayasan Galang.

Laporan: Narasi Persekutuan Masyarakat Adat Mollo Utara, 10 bulan (Desember 1999 s/d bulan September 2000) [Report: Narration of Fellowship of Traditional Peoples of North Mollo, 10 months (December 1999 – September 2000)]. (2001). Unpublished report.

Leur, J. C. van (1955). *Indonesian trade and society: Essays in Asian social and economic history*. The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd.

Li, T. M. (2000). Locating indigenous environmental knowledge in Indonesia. In R. Ellen, P. Parkes, & A. Bicker (Eds.), *Indigenous environmental knowledge and its transformations* (pp. 121-149). Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Longino, H. (1993). Subjects, power and knowledge: Description and prescription in feminist philosophies of science. In L. Alcoff & E. Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemologies* (pp. 101-120). New York: Routledge.

Luke, C. & Gore, J. (1992). Introduction. In C. Luke & J. Gore (Eds.), *Feminisms and critical pedagogy* (pp. 1-14). New York: Routledge.

Luke, C. (Ed.) (1996). *Feminisms and pedagogies of everyday life.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Mackie, J. A. C. (1971). The Indonesian economy, 1950-1963. In B. Glassburner (Ed.), *The economy of Indonesia: Selected readings* (pp. 426-443). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mahfud, M., Hamid, E. S., Marzuki, S., & Prasetyo, E. (Eds.) (1997). *Kritik sosial dalam wacana pembangunan* [Social criticism in development discourse]. Yogyakarta: UII Press.

Mardimin, J. (Ed.) (1996). *Dimensi kritis proses pembangunan* [The critical dimension of the development process]. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius.

Marr, C. (1993). *Digging deep: The hidden costs of mining in Indonesia.* England: Down to Earth and Minewatch.

Marmer Tunua siap ekspor ke Taiwan, Korea dan Jepang [Tunua marble ready to export to Taiwan, Korea and Japan] (1998, January 14). *Surya Timor.*

Maryanti, C., Indriyani, A., Pambudi, H., Tsalatsa, A. Y., Purnaningsih, S. (2001). *Jaman daulat rakyat: Dari otonomi daerah ke demokratisasi* [The era of people's sovereignty: From regional autonomy to democratization]. Yogyakarta: Lapera Pustaka Utama.

Mauss, M. (1990). *The gift: The form and reason for exchange in archaic societies.* (W. D. Halls, Trans.). New York: W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1950).

McFadyen, R. E., Wilson, C., Desmier de Chenon, R., Tjitrosoedirdjo, S., Widayanto, E., Orapa, W., & Aterrado, E. (2000). *Biological control of chromolaena odorata in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines* (Annual Report, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Project CS2/96/91). Queensland, Australia: Queensland Department of Natural Resources.

McGovern, A. F. (1989). *Liberation theology and its critics: Toward an assessment.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

McVey, R. (1996). Building behemoth: Indonesian constructions of the nation-state. In D. S. Lev & R. McVey (Eds.), *Making Indonesia: Essays on modern Indonesia in honor of George McT. Kahin* (pp. 11-25). Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.

_____ (1969). Nationalism, Islam, and Marxism: The management of ideological conflict in Indonesia (Introduction). In Soekarno, *Nationalism, Islam and Marxism* (K. H. Warouw & P. D. Weldon, Trans.), (pp. 1-33). Ithaca, NY: Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program.

McWilliam, A. (1997). Mapping with metaphor: Cultural topographies in West Timor. In J. J. Fox (Ed.), *The poetic power of place: Comparative perspectives on Austronesian ideas of locality* (pp. 103-115). Canberra: Department of Anthropology in association with The Comparative Austronesian Project, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University.

_____ (1989). *Narrating the gate and the path: Place and precedence in South West Timor*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, The Australian National University, Canberra.

Menkopolkam: Sindikat penyelundup imigran akan dibongkar [Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security: Immigrant smuggling syndicate will be dismantled]. (2001, November 9). *NTT Ekspres*.

Menneg Infokom, Syamsul Muarif: Saya munder jika Mega inginkan pembredelan [Infocom Minister, Syamsul Muarif: I'll resign if Mega wants to censor]. (2001, August 13). *Pos Kupang*, p. 1.

Menneg informasi dan komunikasi tidak akan jadi Deppen baru [Minister for Information and Communication won't become new Information Department]. (2001, August 15). *NTT Ekspres*, p. 10.

Mereka umumnya takut bicara: Pengakuan kepala SD/MI (1) [In general they're scared to talk: Admissions of public/Muslim grade school principals (1)]. (2000, April 14). *Pos Kupang*.

Messakh, M. (1999, September). Buntut kasus Ajaobaki: Ketua LKMD pukul Sekdes, Kades melarang masyarakat baca *Udik* [Consequence of Ajaobaki case: Head of village council hits village secretary, village chief prohibits people from reading *Udik*]. *Udik*, *6*, 7.

_____ (1999). *Orang Timor mencuri cendana di tanah sendiri: Suatu tinjuan [sic] terhadap kebijakan Pemerintah Daerah NTT tentang komoditas cendana dan implikasinya bagi kesejahteraan masyarakat lokal* [Timorese steal sandalwood on their own land: A consideration of NTT Provincial Government policy concerning sandalwood and its implications for the welfare of local people]. Paper prepared for Writing Workshop on Natural Resource Management for the People, Indonesian Tropical World Institute (LATIN).

Middelkoop, P. (1982). *Atoni pah meto: Pertemuan Injil dan kebudayaan di kalangan suku Timor asli* [People of the dry land: The meeting of Gospel and culture among indigenous Timorese]. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia.

_____ (1960). *Curse – Retribution – Enmity as data in natural religion, especially in Timor, confronted with the scripture*. Amsterdam: Drukkerij en Uitgerverij Jacob van Campen.

Mies, M. & Shiva, V. (1993). *Ecofeminism*. London: Zed Books.

Mignolo, W. D. (2000). *Local histories/global designs: Coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton, NJ: Princton University Press.

_____ (1998). Globalization, civilization processes, and the relocation of languages and cultures. In F. Jameson & M. Miyoshi (Eds.), *The cultures of globalization* (pp. 32-53). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Minewatch Asia Pacific (1999, February). *The mining curse: The role of mining in "underdeveloping" countries* (Nostromo briefing paper). Retrieved on November 6, 2002 from http://www.minesandcommunities.org/Country/curse.htm

Mitchell, M. R. (2001, August 6). Who knew? *Time, 158* (5) (Asia edition), 22-24.

Mohanty, C. T. (1992). Feminist encounters: Locating the politics of experience. In M. Barrett & A. Phillips (Eds.), *Destabilizing theory: Contemporary feminist debates* (pp. 74-92). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Moore, D. S. (2000). The crucible of cultural politics: reworking "development" in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands. *American Ethnologist, 26* (3), 654-689.

_____ (1998). Subaltern struggles and the politics of place: Remapping resistance in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands. *Cultural Anthropology, 13* (3), 344-381.

_____ (1996). Marxism, culture, and political ecology: Environmental struggles in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands. In R. Peet & M. Watts (Eds.), *Liberation ecologies: Environment, development, social movements* (pp. 125-147). New York: Routledge.

_____ (1993). Contesting terrain in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands: Political ecology, ethnography, and peasant resource struggles. *Economic Gerography, 69* (4), 380-399.

Mudita, I. W. (1998, September 1). *Invasi Chromolaena odorata di NTT: Menyikapi perubahan sebagai peluang menuju pengeloloaan lingkungan semi-ringkai secara berkelanjutan* [Invasion of *Chromolaena odorata* in NTT: Responding to change as the opportunity to move towards sustainable management of a semi-arid environment]. (Lecture given to the Nusa Cendana University Senate; Special Publication PPLHSA UNDANA No. 1/1998). Kupang: Nusa Cendana University.

Murdoch, J. & Clark, J. (1994). Sustainable Knowledge. *Geoforum, 25* (2), 115-132.

Muhammad, C. (1998, August). *Reform of Indonesian mining laws and regulations: An urgently [sic] need.* Paper presented at Legal Reform and Natural Resources Management Policy Workshop held by the Law Faculty, University of Indonesia, Jakarta.

——— (2000, September 14). *Moratorium pertambangan: Langkah strategis menyelamatkan sumber daya mineral Indonesia* [Moratorium on mining: Strategic steps to save Indonesia's mineral resources]. Paper presented to the Ninth Annual Professional Meeting and Fourth Congress of the Association of Mining Experts. Jakarta.

Munggoro, D. W., Muhammad, C., Lopulalan, D., & Adhi, P. (1999). *Menggugat ekspansi industri pertambangan di Indonesia* [Rocking the expansion of the mining industry in Indonesia]. Bogor: LATIN [Indonesian Tropics Institute].

Murdoch, J. & Clark, J. (1994). Sustainable Knowledge. *Geoforum, 25* (2), 115-132.

Neonbasu, G. (Ed.) (1994). *Sejarah pemerintahan raja-raja Timor: Suatu kajian peta politik pemerintahan kerajaan-kerajaan di Timor sebelum kemerdekaan RI* [History of the rule of Timor's kings: Political mapping research into the rule of kingdoms on Timor prior to Indonesian independence]. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan.

Norgaard, R. B. (1994). *Development betrayed: The end of progress and a coevolutionary revisioning of the future.* London: Routledge.

NTT Badan Pusat Statistik [NTT Central Bureau of Statistics]. (1999). *Nusa Tenggara Timur dalam angka* [Nusa Tenggara Timur in figures] (Catalog BPS No. 1403.53). NTT: Author.

O'Neil, W. F. (2001). *Ideologi-ideologi pendidikan* [Educational ideologies: Contemporary expressions of educational philosophies] (O. I. Naomi, Trans.). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar. (Original work published 1981).

Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the word.* New York: Methuen.

Ormeling, F. J. (1956). *The Timor problem: A geographical interpretation of an underdeveloped island.* The Hague, Holland: J. B. Wolters, Gorningen and Martinus Nijhoff.

Parkes, P. (2000). Enclaved knowledge: Indigent and indignant representations of environmental management and development among the Kalasha of Pakistan. In R. Ellen, P. Parkes, & A. Bicker (Eds.), *Indigenous environmental knowledge and its transformations* (pp. 253-291). Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Parpart, J. L. (1995). Post-modernism, gender and development. In J. Crush (Ed.), *Power of development* (pp. 253-265). London: Routledge.

Pejabat Dikbud NTT bohongi masyarakat [NTT Ed. and Cultural Dept. officials have lied to the people]. (2001, November 13). *Pos Kupang.*

Penambangan marmer di Fatumnutu belum ada Amdal [Marble mining in Fatumnutu doesn't yet have an environmental impact study]. (2002, August 31). *NTT Xpress*, pp. 1-2.

Pendidikan di era otonomi daerah [Education in the era of regional autonomy]. (2001, October 24). *Sasando Pos.*

Pimpro BPPL di Soe dituntut 18 bulan [Project leader for construction of the Farm Extention Building in Soe is sentenced to 18 months]. (2001, September 19). *Pos Kupang.*

Poerwanto, H. (2000). *Kebudayaan dan lingkungan dalam perspektif antropologi* [Culture and the environment in anthropological perspective]. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

Polda NTT ungkap sindikat imigran gelap [NTT provincial police uncover dark immigrant syndicate]. (2001, November 5). *Radar Timor.*

Potensi Marmer TTS Bisa Diproduksi 200 Tahun – Bupati Sabuna: Saya Baru Tahu Itu Marmer [TTS Marble Potential Could Produce for 200 Years – Regent Sabuna: I Just Found Out It's Marble]. (1997, Desember 5). *Pos Kupang.*

Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1985). *Jejak langkah* [Footsteps] (Edisi Pembebasan – Freedom Edition). Hasta Mitra.

_____ (1981a). *Bumi manusia* [This earth of mankind] (Edisi Pembebasan – Freedom Edition). Hasta Mitra.

_____ (1981b). *Anak semua bangsa* [Child of all nations] (Edisi Pembebasan – Freedom Edition). Hasta Mitra.

_____ (1988). *Rumah kaca* [Glass house] (Edisi Pembebasan – Freedom Edition). Hasta Mitra.

Propinsi NTT urutan ketiga termiskin di Indonesia [NTT province third poorest in Indonesia]. (2001, October 11). *Pos Kupang*.

PT. Karya Asta Alam (1999, September). *Studi analisis dampak lingkungan (ANDAL) penambangan dan pengolahaan marmer di Desa Netpala* [Environmental impact analytical study of the mining and management of marble in Netpala Village]. Kupang, NTT: Author.

Realisasi PAD di TTS baru 60,53 persen [Realization of Indigenous Regional Income in TTS just 60.53%]. (2001, September 24). *Pos Kupang*.

Regional autonomy, communities, and natural resources. (2000, August). *Down to Earth, 46*. Retrieved November 4, 2002 from http://dte.gn.apc.org/46RAC.htm

Richards, P. (1993). Cultivation: knowledge or performance? In M. Hobart (Ed.), *An anthropological critique of development: The growth of ignorance*. New York: Routledge.

Ride, A. (1998, March). The dark side of the moon. *The New Internationalist, 299*, 7-9.

Roucheleau, D., Ross, L., & Morrobel, J. (1996). From forest gardens to tree farms: Women, men, and timber in Zambrana-Chacuey, Dominican Republic. In D. Rocheleau, B. Thomas-Slayter, & E. Wangari (Eds.), *Feminist political ecology: Global issues and local experiences* (pp. 224-250). New York: Routledge.

_____ (1995). Trees as tools, trees as text: Struggles over resources in Zambrana-Chacuey, Dominican Republic. *Antipode 27* (4), 407-428.

Ruwiastuti, M. R., Fauzi, N., & Bachriadi, D. (1997). *Penghancuran hak masyarakat adat atas tanah: Sistem penguasaan tanah, sengketa dan politik hukum agraria* [Destruction of indigenous land rights: System of land control, disputes and the politics of agrarian law]. Bandung: Agrarian Reform Consortium.

Schrijvers, J. (2000). *Kekerasan "pembangunan": Pilihan untuk kaum intelektual* [The violence of "development": A choice for intellectuals] (N. Katjasungkana, Trans.). Jakarta: Kalyanamitra & Yogyakarta: Penerbit Media Pressindo. (original work published).

Schulte Nordholt, H. G. (1980). The symbolic classification of the Atoni of Timor. In J. J. Fox (Ed.), *The flow of life: Essays on eastern Indonesia*, pp. 231-247. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

_____ (1971). *The political system of the Atoni of Timor*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Schusky, E. L. (1972). *Manual for kinship analysis* (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sembilan jenis galian C andalan pendapatan NTT [Nine kinds of C-class quarries, mainstay of NTT income]. (2000, January 5). *NTT Ekspres*.

Shiva, V. (1997). *Biopiracy: The plunder of nature and knowledge*. Boston: South End Press.

Simanjuntak, L. (1999, March 16). *Advokasi tambang menuju gerakan rakyat: Sebuah pengantar diskusi* [Mining advocacy aiming towards a people's movement: An introduction for discussion]. Paper presented at the First Indonesian Indigenous People's Congress, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Smith, D. (1974). Knowing a society from within: A woman's standpoint. (Excerpt from Women's experience as a radical critique of sociology. *The conceptual practices of power: A feminist sociology of knowledge*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.) In C. Lemert (Ed.), *Social theory: The multicultural and classic readings* (pp. 423-425). Boulder: Westview Press.

Sobrino, J. (1985). *Christology at the crossroads: A Latin American approach* (J. Drury, Trans.). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. (Original work published 1976)

Strathern, M. (1980). No nature, no culture: The Hagen case. In C. P. MacCormack & M. Strathern (Eds.), *Nature, culture and gender*, pp. 174-222. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Surat pernyataan kesepakatan [Letter of agreement]. (1999, May 21). (photocopy of letter of agreement to mine Anjaf, etc. signed by Director of PT. Karya Asta Alam and two local representatives).

Susanto, B. (1997). *Ketoprak: The politics of the past in the present-day Java*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius.

Tambiah, S. J. (1996). *Leveling crowds: Ethnonationalist conflict and collective violence in South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tarbuck, E. J. & Lutgens, F. K. (2000). *Earth Science*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Taussig, M. (1980). *Devil and commodity fetishism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Toer, P. A. (2001, August 6). I just don't believe in her: A celebrated writer and former prisoner asks why Megawati never spoke out. *Time, 158* (5) (Asia edition), 25.

Tommy dikenakan empat dakwaan [Tommy hit with four indictments]. (2002, March 21). *NTT Ekspres.*

Tommy tetap diperlakukan sama dengan napi lainnya [Tommy treated the same as other prisoners]. (2002, August 24). *NTT Ekspres.*

Topatimasang, R. (1998). Pemetaan sebagai alat pengoranisasian masyarakat: Sejarah dan politik sengketa sumber daya alam dan hak-hak kawasan masyarakat adat di Maluku [Mapping as a tool for people's organizing: The history and politics of natural resource disputes and territorial rights of indigenous peoples in Maluku]. In T. Dietz, *Pengakuan hak atas sumberdaya alam: Kontur geografi lingkungan politik* [Entitlements to natural resources: Contours of political environmental geography] (R. Topatimasang, Trans.) (pp. 117-196). Yogyakarta: INSIST Press and REMDEC. (Original work minus this appendix published 1996).

_____, Dilts, R., Fakih, M., & Dananjaya, U. (1985). *Belajar dari pengalaman: Panduan latihan pemandu pendidikan orang dewasa untuk pengembangan masyarakat* [Learning from experience: Facilitator's training guide to adult education for community development]. Jakarta: Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat.

Traube, E. G. (1986). *Cosmology and social life: Ritual exchange among the Mambai of East Timor.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Trible, P. (1978). *God and the rhetoric of sexuality.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Tsing, A. L. (1993). *In the realm of the diamond queen.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Tujuh kasus bom belum terungkap [Seven bomb cases not yet uncovered]. (2001, September 25). *NTT Ekspres.*

Turner, V. (1967). *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Undang-undang otonomi daerah 1999 [1999 regional autonomy laws]. Jakarta: Sinar Grafika.

Undang-undang HAM 1999 [1999 HR laws]. Jakarta: Sinar Grafika.

Vayda, A. P., Walters, B. B., & Setyawati, I. (in press). Doing and knowing: Questions about studies of local knowledge. In P. Sillitoe & A. J. Bicker (Eds.), *Development and local knowledge: New approaches to issues in natural resources management, conservation and agriculture*. London: Routledge.

Warga Mollo Utara datangi Bupati TTS [North Mollo residents approach TTS *Bupati*]. (2002, September 18). *Pos Kupang*, pp. 1, 11.

Warga Molo Utara diminta dukung eksploitasi marmer [North Mollo residents asked to support marble exploitation]. (1997, November 19). *Pos Kupang*.

Young, J. E. (1992, July). *Mining the earth* (Worldwatch Paper 109). Washington, D.C.: Worldwatch Institute.

Zakaria, R. Y. (2000). *Abih tandeh: Masyarakat desa di bawah rejim Orde Baru* [*Abih tandeh*: Villagers under the New Order regime]. Jakarta: ELSAM.